REVOLUTION ON THE SOCIETY PAGE . . . BY DAVID L. COHN

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THE Saturday Review OF LITERATURE

VOLUME XXVI No. 17 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 1943 FIFTEEN CENTS

"GIDEON PLANISH"
by Sinclair Lewis
Reviewed by Howard Mumford Jones

"DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE"
by Lion Feuchtwanger
Reviewed by F. C. Weiskopf

"THE WORLD OF YESTERDAY"
by Stefan Zweig
Reviewed by Robert Pick

"THE COMPLETE LIFE"
by John Erskine
Reviewed by R. Ellis Roberts

"TUNIS EXPEDITION"
by Darryl Zanuck
Reviewed by Raoul Aglion

"WE CAN WIN THIS WAR"
by Colonel Kernan, U. S. Army
Reviewed by Squadron Leader Murray Harris

LION FEUCHTWANGER can look past history into the meaning of the present. (See page 5)

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Revolution on the Society Page

Something is Happening to the World of White Ties and Canapes

DAVID L. COHN

AN eight-ton blockbuster was dropped recently into the bewildered midst of Washington society when Hope Ridings Miller, the young society editor of the *Washington Post,* wrote a *memento mori* for the white-tie world that took global wars and canapes equally in its stride. Under the shattering, if not unladylike, title, "Farewell to Society," she told a surprised and pained contingent of lion-hunting hostesses that "the *Post's* society page would feature only those persons who are doing useful war work."

"In other words," Mrs. Miller concluded, "for the duration . . . we are finished with society-as-such. We are interested only in contributing our bit towards preservation of the only kind of world in which any of us would care to live." A world, apparently, in which life might still be sweet without newspaper accounts of sandwiches, cocktails, and the names of persons who served and consumed them.

In the light of this incipient revolution against the past; this defiance of tradition and the dictates of the *Post's* circulation manager, it might be well, before the curtain falls perhaps upon the society page, to examine it for whatever light it may throw upon our national manners.

Let us begin with the morning of March 6, 1941. Thousands of New York working girls, that morning, were hanging to subway straps when they saw in the *Daily News,* the headline of a feature story written from Palm Beach by the society editor, Nancy Randolph. It read:

PA BLACKS OUT TONI'S STRIP TEASE FOR CHARITY.

A young woman of the Palm Beach colony, Toni (Antoinette) Johnson, was going to "take 'em off for charity" at a Rule Britannia ball—this was in the remote day when we were still throwing catmeat to the British lion—but her father heard about it and "put his foot down hard."

If it was then too cold in New York to take 'em off in the open for any reason—even to save Great Britain—on the east coast of Florida "it was wonderful sitting under the moon . . . Down here a crescent moon's horns point straight up instead of sideways." The Bronx girls who live under the common, sideways moon, read avidly. Although Toni had to keep 'em on, the master minds of the evening's entertainment had provided other surcease from sorrow for those present. They staged a simulated air raid during the ball that followed dinner, and "as the lights were turned off, it sounded as if all hell had broken loose." Everybody enjoyed the synthetic horror except one poor woman who suffered a heart attack when the uproar began and was convinced that Hitler, striking at our vitals, had directed an attack on the Everglades Club.

There is nothing like a bit of fun in impeccable taste. And there is nothing like the society page where the tonic activities of society people are spread for the vicarious stimulation and pleasure of the rest of us. It is here that we learn how the other half of one per cent live, while our curiosity about them is matched only by their eagerness to satisfy it.

Nearly every American newspaper has a society page. A distinction must be made, however, between the small-town society page reporting the activities of persons more or less well known to everybody in town, and the city society page which records the social doings of a carefully selected tiny minority. Thus, day after day, the Hot Coffee (Mississippi) *Tocsin,* publishes such items as these:

Mr. and Mrs. Nulushious Keith, and small daughter Earlene, motored to Memphis yesterday to see "Gone with the Wind." Lester Huckaby is doing nicely at the King's Daughters after an appendicitis operation. Mrs. Willie Nuckles gave a porch party yesterday morning at her home on Sycamore. Those who enjoyed her hospitality and partook of delicious refreshments of Coca-Cola and home-made cookies were . . .

SOMETIMES a small-town society page lets us look straight into the heart of America, as in this account from a Texas newspaper:

Miss Mary Jane White was entertained at a miscellaneous shower Saturday evening at the home of Mrs. J. B. Williams in honor of her approaching marriage to Mr. J. B. Hays . . .

. . . The honoree received the guests in the home, lovely with a profusion of flowers spilling color into the softly shaded atmosphere of the rooms. A single red rose swimming in blue water adorned the coffee table. Geraniums floated in a crystal bowl upon the table with the hand-painted bride's book which was a gift . . .

Miss Esther Dorcas, introducing the program with a reading of "The Last Ride," filled the hearts of those present with sympathy for the unfortunate lovers who were not privileged to be together in this life because of their varied convictions, but who were finally united in death, proving that true love will triumph over every obstacle.

Then followed an amusing reading by Miss Shirley Wooten. A couple were in the parlor spooning when the young man kissed the girl and said, "Now that's addition." She kissed him and subtracted her kiss from his. Then the young lady's father entered, causing division and when he booted the ardent suitor out, that was long division.

When the entertainment was over,

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and the "miscellaneous shower" had fallen

> Delectable refreshments were served. The plate consisting of coffee and a delightful concoction of gold cake, topped with whipped cream and an apricot giving the appearance of a poached egg on toast . . .

This simple account with all of its naivete—perhaps because of it—is somehow touching. It is a vignette of smalltown American life; a transcript of the manners of the people; a record of a ceremony constantly honored throughout the land. It responds, morever, to the canons of news reporting even if it is more leisurely than a city editor would permit. But who in smalltown America is in a hurry? Who doesn't know Mary Jane and her fiance? Who isn't glad to vary the routine of living by giving them prenuptial parties? What housewife doesn't want to read all the details of the party down to the topping of whipped cream on the gold cake? What girl doesn't dream of becoming a bride and being given a shower of her own, while everybody makes a great fuss over her in the morning-mooded time of her life?

IN smalltown society columns there is no snobbish selectivity of names. It is true that Egg Harbor City, New Jersey, and Flowery Branch, Georgia, have their social cliques but the only essential for making the society page is that one should motor to Atlantic City or Atlanta, or break a leg, or give a party and telephone the details to the society editor.

On the other hand, however, the stock in trade of the city society editor is snobbery, the doings of the "right people," the erecting and smashing of social barriers. It is these things that interest the small group in society and—more important to the newspaper—enchant the imaginations of multitudes of shopgirls who will never see Mrs. Cadbury Thrush's five million dollar Florentine villa except in the Sunday feature story. When Consuelo Vanderbilt was married to the Duke of Marlborough in 1895, *The New York Times* reported that "women and children almost threw themselves under the feet of the horses in their desire to look at the occupants of the vehicles."

It is good business to found the society page in snobbery and devote it to the doings of the fashionable. For snobbery flourishes in a democracy such as ours and arises, of course, from social insecurity. Only two groups seem to be free of it. The tiny group of hereditary aristocrats at the top whose social position is so secure that they cannot lose it, and the larger group at the bottom who have no social position to lose. Thus the aristocrat and the truckdriver are democratic, stand in no awe of persons with lah-de-dah pretensions, and go about in no fear of doing the wrong thing or of being seen with the wrong people.

The majority of middle-income Americans are natively dignified and regard the snobbish with contempt ("who the hell do you think *you* are?"), but there is a sizeable segment of plain people who, having acquired wealth and social pretensions, are anxious to climb the social ladder. They are socially insecure, snobbish, and devotees of the society page. They are also rich in buying power and their devotion to the society page of a newspaper is a valuable asset to its advertising department, while—communists to the contrary notwithstanding—few things afford the average woman as much pleasure as reading, quite without envy, about the legendary carryings-on of the rich and the fashionable.

Conscious of all this, the society page is also aware of a slightly changed mood among the peasants on the village green, and so for a long time it has given society a homey touch. Vicarious intimacy with the fashionable is enhanced by calling great ladies by their given names. "Maizie said . . .;" "Andrea looked beautiful in . . .;" "Faith startled everybody by . . ." Thus while class distinction is maintained in a theoretically classless country, it is toned down by calling Mrs. Higginson Shuttleworth, Liz, and, although she is the wealthiest and best-dressed woman in the land, famous for her collection of emeralds and beaux, to hordes of plain women who read about her she is like a next door neighbor who'll lend you a cup of flour whenever you turn up.

The most distinguished achievement of the society page, without parallel elsewhere, is the marriage announcement. It often manages to be at once a stud book, a lower case "Almanach de Gotha," and a page of Bradstreet's financial manual. It might appear, at its best, in somewhat this form:

> Miss Yvonne Elizabeth Deprager, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Singleton Deprager of 120 East End Avenue, New York, Charleston, South Carolina, and Casablanca, Morocco, was married here yesterday in the gardens of her parents' home to Mr. Sidney Hazelwood Harrison, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Hazelwood Harrison of Penn Yan, New York, Augusta, Georgia, Schloss Oberkellner, Bingen-am-Zee, Upper Syria, Austria, and Giddap Plantation, Warrenton, Virginia.
>
> The bride, on her maternal side, is related to Pocahontas, Paul Revere, Mary, Queen of Scots, Bath House John, a pioneer Illinois set-

(*Continued on page 24*)

This Week

April 24, 1943

Features

PAGE

REVOLUTION ON THE SOCIETY PAGE
By David L. Cohn 3

TEMPLES OF THE SPIRIT
By Harold J. Laski 12

THE OPINIONS OF CHANNING POLLOCK
By John Corbin 20

Reviews

DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE
By Lion Feuchtwanger
Reviewed by F. C. Weiskopf 5

GIDEON PLANISH
By Sinclair Lewis
Reviewed by Howard Mumford Jones .. 6

THE WORLD OF YESTERDAY
By Stefan Zweig
Reviewed by Robert Pick 7

THE COMPLETE LIFE
By John Erskine
Reviewed by R. Ellis Roberts 8

THE WAY SOME PEOPLE LIVE
By John Cheever
Reviewed by Struthers Burt 9

TUNIS EXPEDITION
By Darryl F. Zanuck
Reviewed by Raoul Aglion 10

WE CAN WIN THIS WAR
By Colonel Kernan, U. S. Army
Reviewed by Squadron Leader Murray Harris 10

THEY CALL IT PACIFIC
By Clark Lee
Reviewed by Henry C. Wolfe 11

RUNNING TO PARADISE
By John Lodwick
Reviewed by Ben Ray Redman 13

CHICO GOES TO THE WARS
By David Ormsbee
Reviewed by Benjamin Appel 16

SOUTH FROM YESTERDAY
By Willard Robertson
Reviewed by Phil Stong 16

TROUBLE-SHOOTER
By Robert Traver
Reviewed by Melville Cane 23

FORWARD WITH SCIENCE
By Roger D. Rusk
Reviewed by Waldemar Kaempffert 25

Departments

YOUR LITERARY I.Q. 8
EDITORIAL 14
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 15
TRADE WINDS
By Bennett Cerf 18
THE CRIMINAL RECORD 25
THE PHOENIX NEST
By William Rose Benét 26
DOUBLE-CROSTICS: NO. 474 27
DOUBLE-CROSTICS CLUB 27

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Der Fuehrer's Soothsayer

DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE. A novel by Lion Feuchtwanger. New York: The Viking Press. 1943. 375 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by F. C. WEISKOPF

AT certain intervals, Lion Feuchtwanger departs from the medieval or ancient scene which he revives with so much power and creativeness in his historical novels, to present us with a picture of our own period of turbulent and profound social and political changes, thus proving time and again that his intense interest in events and personalities of past centuries and milleniums do not in the least interfere with his searching concern for history in the making.

Lion Feuchtwanger's last three novels dealing with contemporary themes can all be conceived as parts of a vast canvas depicting the ascent of the dark age of Nazi barbarism. "Success" was the story of the roots of Nazism. In "The Oppermanns," Feuchtwanger told us the history of the birth of the Third Reich, and in "Paris Gazette," the world of the anti-Nazis in exile was portrayed—the European world of those agonizing years of appeasement and "white war." Now still another part of the canvas is added, showing still another aspect of Adolf Hitler's rise to power—mirrored in the fabulous career of Eric Jan Hanussen, a Moravian adventurer who in other times would have passed his days as a country fair magician and provincial vaudeville star, but as the Feuhrer's soothsayer was allowed to dismiss his "non-Aryan" past and climb up, for a moment, to the heights of splendor and riches, only to be "removed" by his Nazi friends in their quiet *fehme*-manner.

The theme of the charlatan as the personification of the "bewitching power" of fascist mass hypnotizers has already been touched in Thomas Mann's noveletta "Mario and the Magician"; now it becomes the leitmotiv in Mr. Feuchtwanger's new big novel.

Employing his unusual gifts as an interpreter and portraitist of human characters, Lion Feuchtwanger succeeds in making his hero Oscar Lautensack both a unique personality and the symbol for the Nazi underworld of robbers and adventurers that provided the Third Reich with the new ruling élite.

Around Oscar, who "like the Fuehrer sprang from the Bavarian-Bohemian border . . . like the Fuehrer had difficulty in speaking pure German instead of his native dialect . . . like the Fuehrer had run away from school, trusting his intuition more than arid academic training," there is a rich set of other figures, all of them full of life and so human even in their crimes, excesses, and abnormalities that the reader gets attached to them in hatred or pity or angry interest.

There is Adolf Hitler himself, masterfully drawn in a few intimate scenes showing the cheap actor, the charlatan in the Nazi dictator. There is old Marshal Hindenburg, the shining example of Nordic guile in the mask of loyalty. There is Oscar Lautensack's younger brother Hannsjörg who in many respects resembles shrewd and cynical Dr. Joseph Goebbels. There is Manfred Proell, the Nazi chief of staff, a cold-blooded murderer with a straight and rather open brutality, whereas his friend Ullrich Count Zinsdorff represents the more subtle species who does not "drive the sheep to slaughter, but only marks them." There is Dr. Kadereit, the big industrialist, one of the haughty and ruthless "upper crust" that brought the Nazis into power in order to preserve their privileges of former times and to win new and greater ones; and there is his wife, Ilse, who "had always been proud of being a frigid bitch" playing with the lives of men and with the destinies of whole groups and even countries as if they were mere pawns; and Hildegard von Trettnow, the aristocratic snob always wanting to carry out some new project. . . . What a tapestry of human types and careers!

The plot is, as always in Mr. Feuchtwanger's novels, rich in epical detail, swift in its motion. Scenes like those of the first big Berlin performance of Oscar, or the meeting of Adolf Hitler and chief of staff Manfred Proell (who has come to ask the Fuehrer's consent to the "removal" of his friend, the magician) will be remembered by the reader long after he has ended the book.

The translator, Caroline Oram, has done a good job, considerably better than the translators of "Paris Gazette."

With Which He Strengthened Dust

U.S.S. LEXINGTON

By Raymond Holden

BEFORE the health of water mends again
Its long, illumined lightness, wounded now,
Look at the weapon, deeping in the wound,
The steel that was a vessel and the stain
And smoky pillar of its fiery haft!
This was alive—no mere device to show
With counterfeit of feature, fore and aft,
The multiples of man's small strength and sound.

By more than his commanded companies
Are, in their sea-borne searchings, armed and manned
Islands like this, in power and pride outthrust
To bear the footprint of his victories.
She was his reach that he in reaching slew;
She was the beauty of his mind and hand;
She was the swiftness which he loved and knew;
She was the strength with which he strengthened dust.

Beauty by lack of beauty disarranged;
Speed by its counterpart and force made slow;
Strength by its violent opposite undone.
Now the small chart of eye-cropped sea is changed.
This ship, this land, is falling slowly down
Away from men and all they make and know.
Shaking them off like something not her own,
Creators and betrayers, all and one.

Home to a graceless land, piled cold and deep
With buoyant creatures that are not man's friends.
Once nest and fortress for the flying brave
She leaves them who must live but may not sleep
And all her man-made breath stands like a ghost
Above a silver grass upon her grave.
Symbol of worlds that men have made and lost
She meets her end as all worlds meet their ends
That are half man's, half earth's, the surface free,
The core commanded still by enmity.

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Sinclair Lewis and the Do-Gooders

GIDEON PLANISH. A Novel. By Sinclair Lewis. New York: Random House. 1943. 438 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

ADMIRERS of Mr. Lewis are said to have lamented his departure from the true path of his genius, and to have urged his return from the stage and various other sorts of unprofitable discourse to the kind of work that made him famous. In "Gideon Planish" Mr. Lewis seems to have heeded the call of the faithful. I fear, however, it is a mistake. 1943 is not 1920. The kind of travesty that passed for boldness and even for insight in the days when the *American Mercury* was new and James Branch Cabell the last word in sophistication is not even amusing in these painful times. "Gideon Planish" is a throwback to a manner that is dated.

What is the subject of the new book? The dust-jacket, ephemeral but crisp, tells us where "Gideon Planish" is to stand on the shelf of Lewis exposés:

> SINCLAIR LEWIS
> HAD THIS TO SAY
> ABOUT SMALL TOWNS IN "MAIN STREET"
> ABOUT BUSINESS MEN IN "BABBITT"
> ABOUT SCIENTISTS IN "ARROWSMITH"
> ABOUT WIVES IN "DODSWORTH"
> ABOUT PREACHERS IN "ELMER GANTRY"
> ABOUT DICTATORSHIP IN "IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE"
> *now, in*
> GIDEON PLANISH
>
> Mr. Lewis turns his devastating analysis to uplifters, do-gooders, lecturers, professional philanthropists, committee maniacs, public-dinner presidents, microphone hounds—all rolled into one man.

This is almost a complete review of the volume.

Almost, but not quite. About three-fourths of the novel has banged past the reader when the figure of Winifred Marduc Homeward appears, "the woman, the American woman careerist," and it is a reasonable bet that in 1955 she will be a dictator of the United States and China. Winifred Homeward the "Talking Woman."

> She was an automatic, self-starting talker. Any throng of more than two persons constituted a lecture audience for her, and at sight of them she mounted an imaginary platform, pushed aside an imaginary glass of ice-water, and started a fervent address full of imaginary information about Conditions and Situlations that lasted till the audience had sneaked out—or a little longer.

This, of course, is satire at its most juvenile level; but, method aside, it is clear that Mr. Lewis has poured a vitalizing dislike into the figure of Winifred Marduc Homeward. The consequence of this malevolence is that the simple pattern of his story is suddenly thrown awry.

For the ostensible tale concerns the eponymous hero, whose career as a professional uplifter is traced from the age of ten to his graceful retirement upon the presidency of the corn college that originally uplifted *him*. A less lovable, a grossly denatured Leora Arrowsmith, Peony Planish, a wife whose line of development is upward and onward with the arts, directs with little feminine shrieks and rushes into furniture stores, the bumbling career of her pompous but prudent husband. The rise of the Planishes is supposed to reveal hidden depths in the philanthropic racket.

Sinclair Lewis

Unfortunately, we never get inside Gideon Planish, nor, for that matter, inside the character of his wife. He has originally the faint, primitive makings of an engaging male cad, but this soon fades into the light of common scolding as he becomes a mere instrument with which to pry open the secret selfishness of "these philanthrobbers." It is hard to understand why two or three women should be more or less devoted to him, since, like the gentleman in the "Bab Ballads," he displays no characteristic traits of any distinctive kind. He is, in sum, simply a Moral Lesson.

But three-fourths of the way through the book, as I say, the figure of Winifred Marduc Homeward unaccountably emerges from nowhere, the result being to derail the simple Planish story. All the compressed vitality of Lewis's dislike makes Winifred alive as the Planishes are never alive. Not recognizing the resulting constructional difficulty, Mr. Lewis has dodged the Big Scene. The Big Scene should have been some sort of head-on collision between Winifred and Peony. But the Big Scene was never written. We have in its place a wildly improbable farce melodrama in which the father of Winifred, an ogre named Marduc, gets caught out with a woman, daughter Winifred coming down on him like a ton of brick. To be sure, this sheds an agreeable *True Romances* calcium glare over the concluding chapters of the story, but it is not what the line of the tale requires. Possibly Mr. Lewis was afraid that Winifred would walk right through the Planishes. In that case he should have pitted her against Elmer Gantry.

One suspects that Mr. Lewis is uneasily conscious that fictional technique has developed beyond the simple machinery of "Main Street" and "Arrowsmith." On p. 325 a brief, anonymous figure momentarily emerges from the clatter of his style, "a quiet man got to thinking" (in Mr. Coolidge's idiom), and what he thinks concerns the America, not of Coolidge, but of F. D. R. As thus:

> He thought that the one thing that might break down American Democracy was the hysterical efficiency with which these pressure groups crusaded to seize all the benefits of that Democracy for themselves: the farm bloc, the women's bloc, the manufacturers' associations, the consumers' associations, the bar associations, the medical associations, the Protestant ministerial associations, the labor unions, the anti-labor unions, the Communist Party and the Patriotic Flag Associations. Drug stores combining to force legislation forbidding the sale of aspirin on trains. Irish Catholics voting not as Americans but as Irish *and* Catholics.

And so on for a whole page. This, to be sure, is in one sense sound enough—it is even a needed warning that cannot too often be told. But though Mr. Lewis "got to thinking" may here seem to think in terms developing from our unhappy experiences with the German-American Bund, Father Coughlin, the American Firsters, the farm bloc, and various other groups, some of which are listed above, this kind of attack on the problem merely gives aid and comfort to the very groups involved. The "quiet man got to thinking" has nothing more illuminating to offer than Mr. Coolidge had in his famous question: "They hired the money, didn't they?" In short, there is no great difference between Mr. Lewis's dislike of "blocs" and Mr. Lewis's profound suspicion of altruistic enterprise. Both lead to provincialism, both lead to the isolationist camp, both lead, or may lead, to ways of letting it happen here.

No, "Gideon Planish" has a few golden moments, but it is second-rate Lewis and it is out of date.

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The Storm Within a Storm

THE WORLD OF YESTERDAY. By Stefan Zweig. New York: The Viking Press. 1943. 455 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

"THREE lives"—this is what Stefan Zweig wanted to call his autobiography originally. But apparently, while working on it, he came to realize that the three so widely different backgrounds against which it had pleased the Lord to set his and his generation's life had not been able to interfere with the continuation of the work he loved so much; and life to him was his work.

The effect of the first part of his posthumous offering upon any younger reader is likely to be that of a fairy-tale come to life. Born with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth, early admired by his entourage, unhampered by any thoughts of a conventional career, young Zweig jumped with both feet into literature. Francis Joseph's Vienna was the perfect place for a young man of his inclinations. The Viennese idolatry of all purely artistic activities had been cleverly bred, as a harmless outlet for Austrian energies and *joie de vivre,* by the reactionary governments of the early nineteenth century, and had easily penetrated into the way of life of all layers of society. Nowhere was the author of "non-political" books so much an idol as in Vienna at the turn of the century.

Mr. Zweig's volume is by no means uncritical of that lost paradise. As to Zweig himself, his unusual talent, his ambition, and the freedom permitted by his financial independence made him early outgrow the narrow circle of Viennese literati. Living wherever he liked, travelling whenever he felt the wish to do so, commanding several languages with equal ease, he gradually came in touch with hosts of savants, poets, painters, writers, musicians, sculptors, and actors in Europe and beyond. His autobiography allows the reader to share in the great pleasure he derived from such meetings and from many a sincere friendship.

When war came in 1914, Zweig was deeply shocked. Not for a moment did he fall prey to the chauvinism which in those days swept over almost the entire intellectual élite of the Continent. And as Europe's agony wore on, he managed to re-establish contacts with some of his friends on the other side of the fence. Stefan Zweig's history of his war, or, rather, peace activities makes pathetic reading. He wanted to believe and fervently continued to believe in something like a republic of spirits, an "intellectual brotherhood" beyond and above all national, economic, and imperialistic strife. But often, his love for literature led him to take as the living world what, as a whole, was but an image reflected, according to its own laws, in the pale mirror of paper and print. He wrote and produced in neutral Switzerland a pacifist drama—all his reserve in retrospect cannot gloss over his disappointment when a "nice

Stefan Zweig

success" was all that came out of it. Returning to Austria, he saw with his own eyes the last Hapsburg emperor cross the frontier. At least peace had come, but the world into which he and his art had been born was gone for ever.

"Let us meet the time as it seeks us," so he quotes Shakespeare. And yet his "second life," prolific as it was, became a period of growing aloofness from his time and its crucial problems. Among the twenty-four volumes published between 1919 and 1933 one was, in a way, an approach to one of the problems of his time: his splendid biography of Fouché, the Macchiavellian politician *par excellence.* Perhaps, he was already disillusioned. Perhaps, he was too much engrossed by success which—reward for untiring work at his desk, in libraries, and among manuscripts—"came slowly, consideredly, to stay constantly and faithfully. . . ." He exercised to the full the power of the printed word; he could truly speak of a "community" of readers throughout the world, "a dependable group of people which looked forward to each book, which bought each new book, which trusted in one and which trust one dared not disappoint."

This last of his books will prove no disappointment to his readers. Its closing chapters are very outspoken as to Stefan Zweig's increasing aversion to facing the world "as it seeks us." His favorite character, as he frankly admits, was Erasmus of Rotterdam, the "humanist who, though he understood the madness of the time more clearly than the professional world-reformers, for all his sound reason, was . . . unable to oppose unreason." This was the non-belligerent spirit in which, in 1934, he wrote Erasmus's biography, and again, in 1936, that of Calvin's adversary, Castellion, the man "who succumbs to destiny," and "succeeds not in a worldly way but in a moral sense." But unlike many of his fellow-writers in those fateful years, he knew—this volume bears witness—his own helplessness in measuring up to the exigencies of the day.

As an exile—in his "third life"—he was to discover that neither his world-fame nor his cosmopolitan experience could save him from feeling as lonely and as uprooted as the poorest Jewish refugee. Although less brilliantly written than much of what he has published, the account of his London days in the thirties is deeply moving. Eventually, he sought seclusion again in the writing, in 1938, of a novel based on a very peculiar psychological plot. "'Forget,' I commanded myself." Under the clouds of impending disaster, he started working on a biography of Balzac; for years, he had been strangely attracted by this giant who had grasped all the misery and all the grandeur of his epoch. Stefan Zweig left for Bath, that city which "reflects . . . a more peaceful century, the eighteenth."

When the storm broke, and Europe was plunged into war again by the same forces which once had ended his "first life," he sought refuge for his work in this country only to leave it and its mounting world entanglement for Brazil. But in order to escape fully the ever-present realities, he had to flee life itself. His farewell letter is added to this book; it is the surprisingly modest statement of a tired man who, tenaciously clinging to his concept of life and work, faced extinction with brave resolution.

Robert Pick is a Viennese author now living in this country.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 473)

JEFFERSON:

TO MONROE FROM PARIS

(JAN. 17, 1785)

How little my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of and which no other people on earth enjoy. . . . Come . . . and see the proof of this and on your return add your testimony to that of every thinking American.

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The Personal Preferences of John Erskine

THE COMPLETE LIFE. By John Erskine. New York: Julian Messner. 1943. 355 *pp. Index.* $3.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

I WISH Mr. Erskine had given us more autobiography and less moralizing in this book. It is a genial, friendly book; a gallant effort to make people interested in self-improvement; but there is a good deal in it of the commonplace, and an insufficient amount of self-examination and of precise definition. For instance, Mr. Erskine starts off by stating his passionate preference for "experience"—"Life should be lived rather than watched from the sidelines." But what is experience? To watch may be an experience, too. Many of the world's greatest saints, not a few poets have enjoyed intenser and more real experience by withdrawal of certain kinds: all the world's idlers also find their experience in watching, and do less harm than many who would always be busy about something. No man can decide for another the extent or kind of experience which will make life complete: and experience is valuable not by its range but by its depth.

In the chapter, admirably conceived, on reading and writing, Mr. Erskine tells us of the authors who move him, and suggests a course of reading for others. No one would call him "inexperienced" in reading; yet he never mentions among the moderns of his youth either Ibsen or Strindberg. Even more astonishing is his confession that "with the exception of Virgil and to a less extent Lucretius, the Roman writers have not meant much to me": what was wrong with his teachers that he could find no enjoyment in Catullus, Horace, Cicero, Pliny, or Ovid?

Two of his heroes are Plutarch and Montaigne; and he has an admiration for the Greek tragedians which makes him unfair to Shakespeare. Mr. Erskine has the enviable talent of writing with a most enticing enthusiasm about his great passions in literature. I have rarely read a juster appreciation of Sir Thomas Browne than he has in the chapter on religion; but how comes it that the man who could write this never mentions Browne's greater precursor, John Donne, and seems somehow to have missed that superb chronicle of our mortality, Burton's "The Anatomy of Melancholy?"

In the desultory course of his book Mr. Erskine talks of Music, Dancing, the Fine Arts, "Intimate Crafts" (here are some sound pages on cooking), Conversation, Manners, Foreigners, Religion, Politics, Love, Marriage, and Parenthood. He shows throughout a tolerant, cultured, and convinced philosophy of life. The chapter on politics with its account of the Town Meeting and his estimate of the value of that institution is particularly good; and almost equally so is that on Foreigners. It is not, however, a safe generalization that in the "good days when tourists roamed the earth . . . the English wherever they went stayed close to the English colony." I have known many English tourists who avoided the English "colonists" in France or Italy, and never intentionally went to the hotels chiefly patronized by the English. I wish Mr. Erskine had, in this chapter, discussed how and when the fatal change occurred—the change by which men found the foreignness of things and people not enjoyable or at least entertaining, but disgusting. I suspect myself that the disuse of Latin as an international language may have had something to do with it; but that cannot account for the bitter detestation which, in the last two hundred years, has been so common a trait in the relations between "natives" and "foreigners."

While there are good and eloquent passages in them, the chapters on Love and Marriage arouse most criticism. I am myself always chary of any discussion on love which premises "Nature's intentions"; I distrust this personification of Nature—so far as I know, Nature has no intentions at all. In his discussion of marriage Mr. Erskine makes too much of a highly disputable interpretation of St. Paul's advice to those Corinthians who consulted him, and in another place makes the error of stating that the church meant virginity by chastity. Still, Mr. Erskine's own ideal of marriage is a noble one, and he writes here inspiringly and with good sense.

John Erskine

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

ACTORS AND ACTRESSES

Briefly described below are ten actors and actresses who have appeared in well-known books and plays. How many of them do you remember? Allowing 5 points for each one you can name, and another 5 if you recall the story in which he appears, a score of 60 is par. 70 is very good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 24.

1. One of a group of Athenian business men who were going to present a play about Pyramus and Thisbe, he was cast in the role of the lion.
2. To avoid the embarrassment of appearing in home-made tights, this 11-year-old, just before going on stage, donned the janitor's overalls.
3. A song-and-dance man in a prohibition era night club, he had hopes of being a headliner at the Palace.
4. In the role of a Russian guardsman this actor made love to his wife, but he could never be sure whether she had really penetrated his disguise.
5. Her actress-parents extolled her phenomenal talents as this very young ballerina rehearsed "The Savage and the Maiden."
6. Hoping to become another Harold Parmelee, idol of the silver screen, this Simsbury, Illinois, movie aspirant had learned to imitate every one of his hero's typical gestures, but the result was burlesque.
7. When deafness ended the stage career of this celebrated Shakespearian actor, he devoted his talents to amateur crime detection.
8. Only twelve people in a Mississippi river town turned out to see "David Garrick" and his partner in their Shakespearian repertoire, so he turned to low comedy instead.
9. So determined was this girl to be an actress that she turned down a Hollywood contract and took a job at Macy's so she could interview agents.
10. Between the time she played Nora in a college production of "A Doll's House" and the day her road company closed "Romeo and Juliet" in Pike City, Kansas, this aspiring actress became a real trouper.

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John Cheever's Sense of Drama

THE WAY SOME PEOPLE LIVE. By John Cheever. New York: Random House. 1943. 256 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by STRUTHERS BURT

John Cheever is a triple-feat writer.

UNLESS I am very much mistaken, when this war is over, John Cheever—he is now in the army—will become one of the most distinguished writers; not only as a short story writer but as a novelist. Indeed, if he wishes to perform that ancient triple-feat, not as popular now as it was twenty years ago in the time of Galsworthy and Bennett and their fellows, he can be a playwright too, for he has all the necessary signs and characteristics. The sense of drama in ordinary events and people; the underlying and universal importance of the outwardly unimportant; a deep feeling for the perversities and contradictions, the worth and unexpected dignity of life, its ironies, comedies, and tragedies. All of this explained in a style of his own, brief, apparently casual, but carefully selected; unaccented until the accent is needed. Meanwhile, he has published the best volume of short stories I have come across in a long while, and that is a much more important event in American writing than most people realize.

The short story is a curious and especial thing; a delicate and restricted medium in which many have walked, but few succeeded. It is like the sonnet in poetry; the only artificial (I mean in technique, not content) form of poetry that has ever been able to make itself thoroughly at home within the realms of that magnificent, impatient, sensible, and beautiful mode of human expression, the English language, and, like the sonnet, the short story has, or should have, the same limitations of space, of concentrated emotion, of characters, of theme and events. Never by any chance should it be the scenario, the skeleton, of something longer. Its strength, like the sonnet's, comes from deep emotion and perception, and, when necessary, passion, beating against the inescapable form that encircles it. As in the sonnet, as indeed in all good poetry, not a word or line, or figure of speech, or simile, must be amiss or superfluous. The author has just so many minutes in which to be of value, and the contest—the selection—in his mind is between what he would like to say, and what he should say; the search is for the inevitable phrase and sentence and description that contain the final illumination but which, at the same time, seem inevitable and natural.

As a result, probably not more than a score of truly great short stories have ever been written. The same holds true of sonnets. Even the great masters of the short story, Chekhov, Turgeniev, Maupassant, Kipling, O. Henry in his better moments, and others, only reached their culmination in a few instances. The short story, like electricity, gains its power through its amperage. It is a bullet whose penetration is due to a force poured through a narrow channel. Of all forms of writing it is the most difficult.

The present volume consists of thirty short stories most of which have appeared in the *New Yorker,* the *Yale Review,* and *Story* magazine, and one can see the compression used, for the book is only two hundred and fifty-six pages long. Many of the stories are only a few pages in length, a thousand, twelve hundred words; and at least half of them are eminently successful; a quarter are far above the average; all are well done; and only a couple fail. "Of Love; A Testimony," except for its title, is one of the best love stories I have ever read. There is a curious and interesting development in the book, and in the procession of the stories—the way they are placed—that ties the volume together and gives it almost the feeling of a novel despite the inevitable lack of connection between any short stories. The earlier stories have to do with the troubled, frustrated, apparently futile years of 1939 and 1941; and then there are some beautifully told stories of the average American—the average American with a college degree, the same suburbanite—actually at war, but still in this country. This gives the book the interest and importance of a progress toward Fate; and so there's a classic feeling to it.

No one can tell how many artists, musicians, writers, painters, sculptors, are in our armed forces. They will not emerge for some years yet. When they do there should be something interesting, for these younger men have learned a lot, apparently, and apparently it's part of their make-up. They are just as honest and ruthless as their predecessors, perhaps even more so, but they have regained in some mysterious way their belief in irony and pity and the catharsis, which, despite the Greeks, and Anatole France, the last who announced their necessity, have for some time been regarded as sentimental clichés.

John Cheever has only two things to fear; a hardening into an especial style that might become an affectation, and a deliberate casualness and simplicity that might become the same. Otherwise, the world is his.

Microfilm of a Body and Soul

(For J. G. M.)

By Bette Richart

IRONICALLY enough, behold it here:
The Word made flesh, miraculous the star
Elided in the pool. Remote, unknown,
The blinding archetype; man the imager
Appropriates the simile as his own.

What use can flesh make of the Mystery?
We who can sense it only to betray,
For whom white Truth is transient in a mirror,
Whose clumsy motions the crystal urn destroy.
Through a stained window, can the sun come clear?
The question is too simple: the abstract
Essential light by clay cannot be mocked.
Strike out, strike out the superfluity,
See love not only in the flesh transfixed,
Take intellect's unbearable degree.

Believe the saint's invisible deep meaning
Even for us is possible of gleaning.
Concede that in time we know
By virtue of this mystic fasting and training
The flower and not the straw.

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—From the book

North African March

Darryl Zanuck in North Africa

TUNIS EXPEDITION. By Darryl F. Zanuck. New York: Random House. 1942. 160 pp. $2.

Reviewed by RAOUL AGLION

IN reading this short book of 160 pages, one wonders who deserves the greater admiration: Is it Darryl F. Zanuck, who so accurately kept his day book from November 2 to December 10, 1942, or his editor who succeeded in publishing it in such a short time?

The author, in peace time one of the outstanding figures in Hollywood, is now with the U. S. Army Signal Corps. Since Pearl Harbor, he has flown over 100,000 miles and in his diary, vividly described his flight to North Africa where he was appointed head of the unit that set out to film "American Fight to Africa." In his brief foreword, Damon Runyon calls "Tunis Expedition" one of the finest pieces of reportorial work that has so far come out of World War II. He could have added that it is undoubtedly one of the most brilliant, dynamic, and fascinating.

The book starts in England, at the beginning of the great venture: "British and American together again out to win a continent." After a short trip by air, Colonel Zanuck arrives at Gibraltar where he has the thrill of meeting General Doolittle and then General Giraud, who had just gotten there by submarine. The extraordinary feat of the landing is described, as well as the fight with the French whose minds were distorted by two years of Vichy and Nazi propaganda which, after all, are one and the same thing. Later, in Algeria, Zanuck sees "coming down the road in the moonlight, an advancing column of doughboys. Shirts open, sleeves rolled up, their helmets caked with mud, their canvas leggings and field jackets torn and soiled with the grime of battle, they look for all the world like a Bellows lithograph, or that great scene from 'The Big Parade.'" And this is Algiers:

> Everything about Algiers is white, or seems so in the moonlight. The buildings, the streets and even the few Arabs we pass on the way are cloaked in tropical white.

The hotels were comfortable and, though Zanuck slept with a pistol under his pillow and a Tommy gun at his side, nothing more than air raid sirens disturbed his sleep. He met high ranking German and Italian prisoners of the Armistice Commission. They were the best proof of the extraordinary secrecy kept on the most "extraordinary military expedition of all times."

Zanuck seems to have missed nothing and nobody. He met Admiral Darlan, had a glimpse of General Nogues, seated alongside Murphy, photographed General Eisenhower promoting General Clark to the rank of Lieutenant General, travelled over the muddiest and most hilly of African roads, visited Bougie, ran into Randolph Churchill, ate Arab cooking, drank Algerian coffee, and went to the battle front with his men, his camera, and his Tommy gun. He describes how "the tank crews were settled on the ground near their machines, smoking and shooting a line. They were a typical American lot, rough, rugged, and bearing the stamp of well-trained soldiers. The initial shock of battle had worn off in the past week and now that they had received their baptism of fire, and had come through with flying colors, they were eager for a return engagement."

Through heavy duty, he realized fully the strategic value of Africa, the native problems, and the complicated French colonial policy.

All this is written in a clear and colorful style which makes one regret that Mr. Zanuck did not choose to be a newspaperman. He would have been as successful a reporter as he is a motion-picture producer.

The Final Stretch

WE CAN WIN THIS WAR. By Colonel Kernan, U. S. Army. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1943. 176 pp. $1.50.

Reviewed by MURRAY HARRIS

COLONEL KERNAN returns to the charge, but with less assurance than in his "Defence Will Not Win the War," which appeared last year. He still harps on the importance of offensive action in winning battles, quoting many time-worn instances in history. But though differentiating in this new book between strategy and tactics, he again falls short of the long-term view of the war. He glosses over the many handicaps under which the United Nations have hitherto labored. First of these is lack of equipment; second, lack of training. The initiated knew all along how impossible a knock-out was in the circumstances and this knowledge is now permeating down into the public.

We are still husbanding our growing strength, but are now sparring for position. Henceforth the lightning thrust, the crippling blow so dear to the heart of this author are within the bounds of possibility. From now on, we shall meet the enemy on more even terms, because we are rapidly overhauling our lag in "perfection of administration," as compared with the finished product created by the Prussian genius for military organization. The author says the very opposite—that we suffer from "overadministration" and strive for too much perfection. All our initial reverses were due to delays and difficulties in setting up the administrative machinery and getting it to work smoothly. Contradicting himself, Colonel Kernan quotes Foch as saying Napoleon failed because he paid too little attention to the means (too little administration?) and only saw the object—"to chastise the insolent Alexander."

Too much study of tactical works appears to have left this author with a confused idea of long-term strategy. His is a one-track mind. He would have us bring the enemy to battle and crush him at all costs. He advocates mortal thrusts in Italy and the Balkans, but considers Guadalcanal a strategic wild-goose chase. Australia doesn't. He even calls the seizure of North Africa "rim of the wheel tactics."

In a word, Colonel Kernan's new book is as plausible and at the same time as unconvincing as ever. He puts his case well and treats us to a delectable salad of quotation and metaphor. But he focusses the attention of the reader on one sole facet of the kaleidoscope of war.

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Nothing Pacific Except the Geography

THEY CALL IT PACIFIC. An Eye-Witness Story of Our War Against Japan from Bataan to the Solomons. By Clark Lee. New York: The Viking Press. 1943. 374 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HENRY C. WOLFE

WE have had war correspondents' books on the Japanese and their global ambitions, on the campaigns for the Solomons. "They Call It Pacific" is a vast and smoothly pieced mosaic of which these all form part. Associated Press byliner Clark Lee is the man to give us this over-all view of the war with Japan; he has probably seen more of it than anyone else. His superb report is a veritable arsenal of source material on the tragically slighted "secondary front."

Clark Lee speaks with authority on the Far East. After serving over two years as chief of bureau at Honolulu, he was transferred to Tokyo and later to Shanghai. He knows the Japanese. He travelled with their armies in various Chinese campaigns, flew in their military planes, saw their bombers operate and their soldiers fight. For knowing too much about the Imperial Navy he was given third place on its black list. In late 1941, on his way to a leave in the United States, he got as far as Manila. The home office cabled him to remain there pending developments in the Orient.

The "developments" came December 7 at Pearl Harbor and did not take long to hit the Philippines. Mr. Lee headed for the front, lived through days of hazardous and melodramatic action, and reached Manila with just about enough strength left to write the first eye-witness account of the Japanese invasion along Lingayen Gulf. From Corregidor on January 9 he got off the first Philippines dispatch to be sent out by any American correspondent since New Year's Eve. From then on the Lee's eye view of the conflict was reported in a series of dispatches which United States army officers have characterized as "the best this war has produced on any front."

"They Call It Pacific" opens dramatically in pre-Pearl Harbor Shanghai. There a California-born Japanese soldier brought the foreign correspondent a friendly warning to leave the country within ten days. Mr. Lee sailed for Manila the following day, "leaving behind the gigantic prison camp that was Shanghai." On the trip to the Philippines he sent dispatches predicting that Japan would soon strike. He reported the fact that for the past year 3000 Nazi technical, industrial, aviation, and naval experts had been in Japan collaborating with the Imperial army and navy.

The story of what the Imperial army and navy did to the Philippines has been told in other books. None tell it more movingly than "They Call It Pacific." Mr. Lee is not one of the war reporters who write with all the stops out. His brisk, graphic prose is moving because of the unsurpassed heroism of the defenders of the Philippines and the tragedy of their plight. He lets the noble deed and the homely incident speak for themselves. He is deft with the human touch without being sentimental. Impartial in praise and fearless in criticism, he recounts stories that the censors killed in his dispatches. Such a story is the account of our navy's destruction of the base at Cavite, America's Goetterdaemmerung in the Philippines.

Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Islands X, Y, and Z—these were stops on the 40,000-mile Pacific odyssey. On a New Zealand-Fiji flight newsman Lee got the first-hand account of the Battle of the Coral Sea. He arrived in Honolulu in time to cover the Battle of Midway, getting the stories from the excited young heroes of the epic victory. On the Fourth of July he boarded the carrier to which he was assigned. In the Philippines he had seen action in the PT's, the navy's smallest boats: now hoped to get into the thick of it on one of the largest. He did. In one operation he flew over the Solomons in a Marine offensive, in another he found out what it is like to be on a torpedoed carrier.

—From the book

The chapters of the book are studded with the names of heroes—Colin Kelly, One-Man Army Wermuth, Villamor, MacArthur, Halsey, Romulo, Wainwright, Bulkley, Cox, Akers, and a host of other magnificent expendables. We have only to follow the ubiquitous Clark Lee to find out the stuff of which war correspondents are made. We see a gallant company of them in action, among them Melville Jacoby and Jack Singer, who later met death in line of duty. All over the Pacific map United States soldiers, sailors, and marines prove that they can outfight the Japanese if only they have the tools of war. Their brave Filipino comrades in arms fight on as long as there is breath left in their starved bodies. It is a twice-told tale now, grown into national legend, but, like the story of Valley Forge, it takes on new glory with the telling.

In "They Call It Pacific" we get to know the enemy better. Two years before Pearl Harbor General Homma once said to Mr. Lee: "I think every American believes he can handle any two Japanese soldiers. . . . We are proceeding with this in mind and are prepared to lose ten million men in our war with America. How many," he asked, "are you prepared to lose?"

Mr. Lee devotes Chapter 33 to a realistic, courageous discussion of the Japanese. They won the first part of their war "partly because they planned well and struck boldly and fearlessly. Mostly they won because of the indecision and slowness of the United States and our failure to send more than token forces to the Far East." He talks about their perfect logistics, their sadistic cruelty, their lack of imagination, their women soldiers. Defeat will not break the morale of Japan's armed forces. Mr. Lee thinks "that the Japanese will fight vigorously and unflinchingly until an overwhelming weight of steel and explosives smashes their ships, shipyards, and munitions factories, and completely destroys their power to resist."

Clark Lee's book is an eye-opener. If it doesn't convert the grumblers, the cynics, and ration the holders-back, nothing will. There is no preaching in its pages, yet it gets over the anguished message of the planeless Air Corps sergeant in the Philippines: "Tell them this isn't only our war, it's the war of every American."

BUY BONDS

Don't Wear Them

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Temples of the Spirit

In Praise of Booksellers in Britain

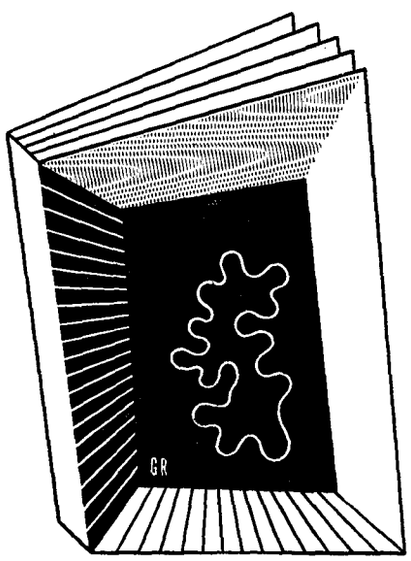
HAROLD J. LASKI

IT is time that someone paid a tribute to a noble body of men and women whose service to the nation in wartime has been badly overlooked —I mean the men and women who run the bookshops.

A good bookshop, after all, is one of the supreme temples of the human spirit; and a good bookseller is one of the finest of human creatures. By and large, I suspect that good bookshops have done more solid work in adult education than all the classes organized since the days of the mechanics' institutes; and I hazard the guess that Blackwell's at Oxford and Heffers' at Cambridge provide as much intellectual stimulus as any of the colleges in either of the ancient universities. It has been one of the many tragedies in the history of London University that its scattered character has failed to make it possessive about a good London bookshop. If I were the Vice-Chancellor I would know no rest until I had made that unique Londoner Mr. J. G. Wilson of Messrs. Bumpus'—he is, of course, a Scotsman—move bag and baggage from Oxford Street to Bloomsbury; just as every medieval college had its chapel, so every modern university would have its bookshop if it had that sense of the fitness of things which recognizes that browsing among books is the surest highway to thought.

And the good bookshop has done marvels in this war. Publishers may have been blitzed; printers and binders may be short of paper and staff; Mr. Bevin may be adamant about his claims to that type of assistant whose taste and patience and ingenious dexterity in discovering the unfindable proves that Heaven itself made him a bookseller; despite everything they have kept open. Despite everything, they are eager to talk about their wares, to urge you to the book you somehow missed, to convince you that there is, after all, a realm where thought is free and reason the master of its fate. No sinkings in the Atlantic will prevent my friend Cooper from producing for me that second volume of a treatise from the University of North Carolina which I had not hoped to see until the days of peace; and his eternal good humor, even in the blackest days of 1940, and after an all-night watch with the Home Guard, will remain one of those memories which glow in reminiscence. I know few Tories more absolute than my good friend Heffer; perhaps that is why he insists that he is a Liberal. But not even his deepest suspicion that Cambridge will never be the same place after its invasion by the University of London has prevented him from continuing to welcome me to his palace, even though, in his heart, he is doubtful whether my wanderings ought not to be limited by a Defense Regulation to Collets' in the Charing Cross Road. And what, after all, could be more delightful than to know that the conviction that his opinions are devastatingly obsolete is only less profound among his assistants than that article of their faith which makes of Trinity a kind of minor annex to Heffer?

THE bookshops of Oxford and Cambridge have a unique chance in a unique atmosphere. Old David is dead; but his stall still furnishes its mass of attractive oddities with an alert figure by your side who, if his finger darts unerringly to an antique treasure, is as likely as not to be Lord Keynes. Or, if you want to know what the war has done to the taste of students, you cannot do better than talk to O. H. Jermy, who not only knows unerringly whether any given book is in print, but can tell you, quite infallibly, that you should send another volume to this student in the R.A.F. as the one you propose is the one he bought himself when he was in Cambridge on his last leave. Nor can I omit that kindliest of old friends, the head of the great foreign room at Deighton and Bells, to whom I think the fall of France was like a break in an affection which had borne the trials and tribulations of dealing with French publishers without resentment for nearly fifty years; I think his personal pleasure in finding for me, within a week, two copies of Renan's famous letter to D. F. Strauss—which ought to be reprinted—was almost as great as my gratitude to him.



Perhaps, in a sense, the bookshop at its best is seen, in wartime, in London or the provinces. There, the client is more general than particular. It may range from an eminent scholar who wants a book that no one will ever buy again, through the soldier, British, American, more rarely from Canada or Australia, to snatch a hurried hour in his leave mentally to renew his spirit, on to the old lady whom I swear I saw with my own eyes ask for two of the novels of Emma Jane Worboise (she must have lived in Kensington). If the Ministry of Information really wants to know what the provinces are thinking, I doubt if they could do better than give an hour of talk to that endless appetite for every sort and condition of bookbuyer, from the young aircraftman who is firmly told of the virtues of Professor Levy's "Introduction" to that eminent policeman turned publicist for empire to whose groans over my soul he will cheerfully listen while he digs out for me some Quaker pamphlets of the seventeenth century marvelously preserved in some backstreet house in Rochdale. Not, indeed, that Manchester will ever be quite the same since the blitz destroyed, in Hewkin's shop, a paradise of treasures in early economic literature before which even connoisseurs like the late Professor Foxwell and that inexhaustible bibliographical fountain H. L. Beales would stand in reverent admiration. Or there is Grant of Edinburgh, where the kindness of the staff almost exceeds the adorable unexpectedness of the stock, and Thin, of the same place, who handed me a collection of the pamphlets of Sir Henry Vane with that casual air, so carefully assumed, which is the ultimate mark of the great bookseller by nature. Who cannot meet the test of war's endurance where the men (and women now) who preside over these noble habitations face its trials and tribulations with a confidence at once so serene and so proud?

Nor can I forget to emphasize what every bookbuyer from San Francisco to Chungking will want to know, that Mr. J. G. Wilson remains unchanged. Nothing ruffles his cheery dogmatism. He lets Mr. Shaw take the other copy of Professor Sabine's fine reprint of Gerrard Winstanley in a mood that

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cunningly combines his sense of pleasure in the purchaser with a due knowledge of the obligation conferred. I have seen him morally compel, by sheer force of character, an eminent peer to buy an ugly edition of one of Trollope's novels because he knew that his lordship's niece would like (God help her!) the plates in the volume. His appreciation of the Holmes-Pollock letters ought to earn him not only the thanks of the Cambridge syndics, but endless gratification from those whom his own eye for a real book has taught that the race of great letter-writers is eternal if one goes down the side-alleys and does not remain content with the high-road. It was said, I think by a late Bodley's Librarian, that the librarian who reads is lost; Mr. Wilson embodies the profounder aphorism that the bookseller who reads wisely has won his game. The Hitlers and Mussolinis come and go; is there a reader who frequents the bookshops unaware that while men like Wilson remain, with their endless cheerfulness, their pawky humor, their conviction that, come what may, no tyrant could ever destroy a great book to which one determined bookseller had found his way, this war is an interruption of civilized living only, not a term to that ultimate source of happiness—the satisfaction of the curiosities of the mind?

This, you may challenge, is one man's form of escapism. In some degree, perhaps; and yet, I venture to believe, not wholly so. A friend of mine, part of whose task is the inspection of interned prisoners of war, left with a young Nazi airman, at his request, a copy of Emerson's "English Traits." Some months later, he heard from the airman, asking if it were possible for him to have the loan of other works by Emerson. A little later still, revisiting the same camp, he talked again with the airman. "If," said the latter, "we had learned these things at home, we should not have been fooled into this adventure." There is the flush of dawn over one man's darkness. So long as we keep our bookshops stocked with books and full of clients that dawn will break over the darkness of others, too; perhaps even over our own. I know no symbol of freedom more vital than the shop on whose shelves neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, need fear exclusion. For to insist that exclusion and civilization are antithetic terms is to have the clue to humane living. If I had to put the purpose of this war in a sentence I should say that we fight it that men and women may freely choose themselves the books which give nourishment or pleasure. So long as we can continue to say that, we can be confident of the outcome of this struggle.

The War Story of Adrian Dorman

RUNNING TO PARADISE. By John Lodwick. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1943. 381 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

IN this book, which is advertised as a "$1,000 War Novel Prize Winner," Mr. Lodwick tells the story of Adrian Dormant, a young English sculptor resident in France, who joins the French army at the outbreak of war in 1939, is drafted to the Foreign Legion, finds himself caught up in the great retreat of June, 1940, takes part in the defense of Soissons, is set adrift by the disintegration of the French armies, and is captured and imprisoned at Sens, whence he escapes to make his way through occupied France, and later through unoccupied France, in and out of civilian and military prisons, to the free side of the Spanish frontier.

It is the author's misfortune, though not his fault, that much of his material —of which large portions are his own, by right of autobiography—has already been made familiar by repetitive and overlapping records. It is his misfortune that other writers, such as Hans Habe in "A Thousand Shall Fall," have organized this material far better than he has. And this, of course, comparatively speaking, *is* his fault—or his faults.

These are several, of which the two most notable are his inability to communicate interest or excitement in the relation of events that are themselves intrinsically interesting and exciting, and his failure to realize character. The two are closely related, for a novel reader can be interested and moved only if he is made to care, and he can be made to care only by means of successfully created characters. Mr. Lodwick is glib with names and physical descriptions and personal histories, but he does not succeed in pulling his people across the threshold of creation. Even in the central case of Dormant, after spending three hundred and eighty-one pages in his company, we leave him without feeling that we have known a man. And in conversation the minor characters, like bad actors taking their tone from a leading player, sound far too much like Dormant himself, while he, in his diary, manages to match almost exactly the prose style of his creator who discourses on many subjects in his own person.

Mr. Lodwick's minor faults include a fondness for "clever" writing, a liking for over-elaborate similes, an unfortunate wavering between the world of drama and the world of farce, and a native inclination towards the disgusting. War is rich in things and acts unpleasant, and it would be unforgivable to write of them pleasantly, but it is possible to write of them truly without exhibiting oneself as an amateur of nasty details.

The proof-reading of this book is so slovenly as to be remarkable, but carelessness of another kind is more important. On page 140 we read that Dormant's mother died when he was still a lad. On page 224 we are mildly surprised to read that Dormant's mother discouraged his going to France after his wife's death. And on page 312, we are quite flabbergasted to find Dormant, imprisoned in Avignon and in need of money, addressing himself to this same enduring parent.

That an author should slip so badly is sad. But the matter goes further: all the way through the process by which a book is manufactured, in fact. Are we to believe that our man-power shortage is already such that publishers, for their own protection, should start stamping their books: "Published but not read?" The French have a word for it.

Mary Roberts Rinehart, Joseph Grew, Fanny Hurst, Joseph E. Davis, Upton Sinclair, and Robert Nathan are among the authors who have contributed autographed copies of their works to be auctioned for the benefit of the United Yugoslav Relief. Proceeds of the auction will be used for improving the lot of Yugoslav prisoners of war.

—From the jacket, "Scum of the Earth."

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"THE FIFTH SEAL"

A LESSON in How Not to Conduct Criticism may be learned (if they are teachable) by pressure groups everywhere, from the current controversy over Aldanov's "The Fifth Seal."

Long before the book was published, except for a first section in Russian in an obscure Parisian magazine, long before would-be critics could know anything about it except from dubious report, a flood of letters began to pour in to editors, publishers, professional critics, men-of-letters, and the Book-of-the-Month Club, which was reported to have chosen it for distribution. These letters, with only one or two exceptions, all resembled one another. The sender had not read the book, but he had been informed that it was a bitter attack upon Soviet Russia which should not be circulated in America at the present time. Some thought that it was an old book dragged out to disturb American-Russian relations, some thought it was a novel about Russia, some thought it was a piece of pure propaganda. But all agreed that, though they had not read the book and could not describe it, "The Fifth Seal" should be suppressed. One woman, who got the signals mixed, begged the publishers to recall "The Seventh Cross" by "that Frenchman," because it slandered the noble Russians. "The Seventh Cross" was written by a German communist and told the tragic story of the attempted escape of German communists from a German concentration camp!

All this might be just an instance of the irresponsibility of a handful of agitators, trying to form a pressure group. If such a pressure group had been successful, it would have done more harm to Russian-American relations than a dozen books of real propaganda. For *any* book that deals with human nature in its weaknesses as well as in its strengths can be used as propaganda by ill-wishers, once it has been perverted by misleading publicity. If we insist upon making a weapon of a rolling pin or an umbrella, our enemies will do likewise.

But "The Fifth Seal" is definitely not propaganda, and never by any possibility could have been written, as it is written, for purposes of propaganda. It is a novel about the decline of Western Europe as shown by life in France. There are Russians in it—admirable Russians, Russians as well adjusted to the new world as most of the French characters described definitely are not. And there is one rather shoddy Russian in the novel; and one old and dying revolutionary, a character commanding the deepest respect, but disillusioned, wondering whether the usefulness of revolutionaries like himself is not over, wondering whether the revolution itself was not a mistake. He reflects as did Cardinal Wolsey in Shakespeare's Henry VIII:

> Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
> I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Was this anti-Tudor or anti-Stuart propaganda? No one in that English court, so jealous of its divine right, seems to have been fool enough to make such a charge.

Few readers know how common are pressure campaigns against every kind of book with ideas, truth, and vitality in it. These campaigns seldom get to the surface, and, when they do, usually prove to be as ignorant or as misinformed as this one. But they may not always be as ill-judged and as irresponsible as the present attacks on an honest work of literature. Beware!

It is impossible to take too seriously an attempt to suppress a book by critics who have never read it, yet one cannot take too seriously the attempted perversion of a work of sincere literary art into a propaganda pamphlet. If that sort of double-dealing once gets under way, the freedom of literature in this country will be truly endangered. The Daughters of the American Abolitionists protest "Gone with the Wind." The United Southern Societies urge "John Brown's Body" be taken out of the schools (the South is praised in that poem, but look at John Brown!). The Chicago Irish Societies get Shakespeare's "Henry V" removed from the curriculum because of its English nationalism. The Friends of Russia object to "War and Peace" because of its slurs on the past of an always heroic Russia. The French organizations write in condemning all recent novels about the fall of France. A member of the Ohio Association of Realtors digs up "Martin Chuzzlewit" and is horrified. The Ohio valley was never like that. Suppress it!

Literary art in the service of propaganda must take its chances in times like these. But art in the service of human nature must be free to seek a true interpretation, let the chips fall where they may.

As for Aldanov's "Fifth Seal," whoever reads it is likely to emerge pessimistic, for it is a tragic story of the decline of a great culture centering in France. But also with a warm feeling of human kinship for the Russians in that book, and respect for the new Russia, still close to that violence by which, as Zurckhardt says, all states are formed.

For this new Russia, two of the characters in this novel willingly give their lives; and a third, a young and attractive Soviet girl, represents a human being completely adjusted to modern life, and likely to succeed where the older cultures have failed.

H. S. C.

The Sharpened Hour

By Sara Van Alstyne Allen

YESTERDAY, tomorrow, and the quiet now
Drift from the invisible, shaken bough.
The cold flakes glimmer as they slowly turn.
Like lost, reluctant stars they burn,
Subdued and gentle in the winter sky.
Their myriad beauty seals the watching eye . . .
Each to its pattern true, yet voyaging free
Above the rooted house, the anchored tree.
Will bloom with white, will shape the flower
That has no stem . . . until the flakes that blow
From sloping sill, from velvet branch, will show
A tree of stars . . . a house of snow.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The Fifth Seal"

SIR:—In Trade Winds [*SRL*, April 3] Bennett Cerf raises the question of whether Aldanov's "Fifth Seal" is anti-Soviet or not. His answer is no, because the novel is "anti-humanity" rather than anti-Soviet. Apart from the wisdom of putting the immense resources of the Book-of-the-Month Club into the circulation of an "anti-humanity" book at this time, I cannot agree with Mr. Cerf that the "Fifth Seal" is not anti-Soviet.

"The Soviet representatives," writes Mr. Cerf, "are neither better nor worse than the French, Belgian or unidentified nationals of the plot." However the French nationals are representative of what Mr. Cerf characterizes, in the same piece, as "the dry rot . . . sapping the vitality of the Third French Republic faster than the worst pessimists suspected." Using only this evidence, which Mr. Cerf puts forth as rebuttal, this presents a representative group of Soviet officials as being decadent as the Frenchmen who brought their country down to disaster.

Since it is through Soviet diplomatic officials that our association with the Soviet Union is carried on what confidence will the readers of "The Fifth Seal" be left with that our associates are competent and trustworthy?

History itself is providing the best answers to Aldanov. The Soviet nation did not go down, obviously because its administration was not made up of Aldanov's decadents. It is regrettable, however, that the Book-of-the-Month Club has added this task to toiling history. Perhaps half a million copies of the book will be distributed and two to three million people will at least read into it. Through it, such prejudices against the Soviet Union as the readers have will be given a seeming confirmation. Some three million people confirmed, to a greater or less degree, in anti-Soviet prejudice—Can we lightly continue to depend on history to counteract the effects in time?

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

New York, N. Y.

SIR:—In expressing my gratitude for Bennett Cerf's "Trade Winds" which blow so breezily, so full of champagne, permit me nevertheless to protest his pronouncement in the April third issue: that The Book-of-the-Month Club choice for May is *not* anti-Soviet. I have read every word of "The Fifth Seal," from page one (where the Old Bolshevik feels "a surge of relief" at being out of Soviet Russia and in Nazi Germany) to the final page (where the Soviet Ambassador tries to bribe a famous French writer to say at least one kind word in defense of the Soviet Government). It is perhaps fortunate that the people of the U.S.S.R. do not have a similar Book-of-the-Month Club at this particular time when an understanding of and sympathy with the people of allied nations is deemed so essential for post-war unity.

I am raising no question of censorship or suppression of this or any book; my protest is against the doubtful morale value of an artificially promoted large scale distribution *at this time* of what can only be described as a sneer campaign directed at the government, the ideals, and the dead heroes of our Soviet allies. The fact that Mr. Aldanov also sneers at French and Spanish anti-Fascists in this (to quote Mr. Cerf) "anti-humanity" novel does not excuse its untimeliness; rather the contrary. I would like to ask Mr. Scherman and his colleagues in the Book-of-the-Month Club one question: what would you think of Russia's contribution to allied unity if there were now being widely distributed among the Soviet readers a similar novel dealing, for example, with the period following the *American* Revolution; a novel in which the leading Americans would be a sick, tired, disillusioned, hopeless Sam Adams who had come to despise democracy and sneer at Jefferson, a sick, tired, disillusioned, hopeless General Lee (formerly "Light Horse Harry," but now, of course, "Heavy Horse" ditto) who dreamed only of the happy, happy days when we were a British Colony, and an ambassador who moved fearfully in an atmosphere of sick, tired, disillusioned, hopeless people, dreading the inevitable moment when he would be officially shot by Daniel Boone in one of Washington's chronic, purposeless purges? Certainly Hitler would gladly assist in the distribution of such an educational volume, and certainly Mussolini would be glad to contribute the services of the talented Ezra Pound to write an appreciative blurb for the jacket. But, as I understand it, Hitler and Mussolini are not our allies; and Stalingrad was not defended by a sick, disillusioned, hopeless people.

DONALD OGDEN STEWART.

New York, N. Y.

"We've decided to raise your rate to twelve cents a word, Smith—that ought to get rid of your character who stutters."

SIR:—About Mr. Bennett Cerf's comments on "The Fifth Seal," the Book-of-the-Month's choice for May, I should like to say this. Mr. Cerf describes the novel as definitely not anti-Soviet, but rather anti-humanity. But if it is anti-humanity, isn't it also anti-Soviet and anti-everything implied in that "century of the common man" for which we are supposed to be fighting? One might as logically say of some other book—it is definitely not pro-Hitler, but rather anti-humanity. Mr. Cerf, far from disposing of the objection to "The Fifth Seal," has greatly strengthened it. I should add that I am one of the people who did bother to read the book from cover to cover, and who consider it anti-Soviet and therefore a most unfortunate choice at the present.

DOROTHY BREWSTER.

New York, N. Y.

Don't Agree with Me

SIR:—Praise to Mr. Villard for his piece about the people who come at you with their infallible finality and tell you that they read everything you write and disagree with a good deal of what you say. The brood is scattered over the land.

It is a great thing for Mr. Villard to take them apart in his skillful anatomy. He has done a job for a legion of us who have longed with a fierce longing to make the right reply.

Once I did a little in that direction. It was after a church service, and one of my parishioners barely let the benediction finish when he came running at me. "I do not agree with you," he said with a staccato threat of my undoing. Under the impact, I stepped back one pace, held my balance, and replied, "Well, that only means that I do not agree with you." A pause, and I added, "After all, is it a matter of cosmic importance?" This last he could take as he liked. I have worked the same line as writer, editor, and platform performer. It has never failed.

ALBERT C. DIEFFENBACH.

Cambridge, Mass.

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Ten Years of Wars

CHICO GOES TO THE WARS. By David Ormsbee. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1943. 403 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BENJAMIN APPEL

MR. ORMSBEE'S volume belongs on the shelf of the I-was-here, I-was-there-when, books being turned out these wartime years by correspondents, reporters, wandering free lances, lady journalists with the souls of missionaries, fuzzy interpreters, elbow-rubbers of the famous, etc. It reports on ten years of wars from Dollfuss's slaughter of the Austrian workers to Pearl Harbor and Tojo. "I don't remember why I had come to Vienna but I stayed two years . . . and I don't remember knowing anything about the politics of the damned sad city about to be murdered by the dressy, warped little midget, Der Kleiderstander . . . but him I did know." Ormsbee admits that he doesn't own an all-seeing x-ray eye; he admits his blind spots. This deserves three cheers in an age of journalistic tin gods in tweed suits. Ormsbee's wars are uneven. His writing about the Franco war against the Spanish people, in which the author was a Loyalist soldier, is first-rate. There is the color of the "heavy silver mountains"; the powerfully selected detail—"one day I saw a lot of little girls with their throats cut and their dresses neatly replaced over little stomachs opened up by Moorish bayonets"—combined in a prose as good as the war descriptions in Sender's "Pro Patria" or Sholokhov's "The Silent Don." His section "Romance Awaits You In Germany" hasn't the same impact, yet his descriptions of Hitler and especially of Goering as a huntsman are among the best I have ever read of these two much-described fascists.

Ormsbee is at his best in describing men at the trade of war; what they eat; how they fight; what they feel and see; what they hope for and how they die. He has the violent hatreds. These include military experts, the "Harvard frumps in the State Department," many large newspapers, Lindbergh, Ford, reactionary clericals, and industrialists. He likes "the little people," as he declares many times, and at the same time his pages prove (and a writer's pages are always a dead give away) his fondness and even fascination for the bizarre, warped, piratical bipeds that are produced in every society going through the convulsions of mighty change. The Nazi big-shot known as The Keg, the British tea planter Smith-Brasil, who was "the old-fashioned, Somerset Maugham kind, with a clear, protuberant public-school eye," the Baroness who ran a sort of black market in political favors and passports in Germany, serving as a middleman between the Nazis and the correspondents—these, and many others are written of in a hot personal prose. They are balanced by "little people" and by intellectuals such as Ormsbee's friend, the London correspondent, Shad Roe, who voices what I feel is Ormsbee's own conviction. "We can no longer support a fat skin, we can no longer turn the other way when power and political hogwash and business madness ruin us." And: "Call it Christ, Lenin, Bhudda, Henry George, Einstein, Tolstoy, but give us honest hope." "Give it a name," Ormsbee says to Shad Roe. In this, Ormsbee echoes the feeling of all honest men who want a belief strong enough to beat back and to destroy the belief that is fascism.

Willard Robertson

David Ormsbee

The Morals of Milo

SOUTH FROM YESTERDAY. By Willard Robertson. New York: J. B. Lippincott. 1943. 309 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

WHEN Milo refused, like Joseph, to play up to his employer's wife she had him fired from his job as a radio mechanic. Not that Joseph was a radio man. On the way home someone tried to pick his pocket in a bar; incensed by this effort to take his last payroll Milo smashed the fellow's hand with a bar mallet and he and the bartender split eleven hundred dollars and a very large diamond, the poor artist's daily takings. On this basis, pocket-picking in Manhattan is something ambitious young men should investigate.

Milo had an opportunity to buy a half interest in a fishing boat for two thousand dollars, but when he mentioned this to his pregnant wife she jumped out a fifth floor window. She had been in a boat disaster and pledged him to avoid the sea. Milo had antagonized the neighborhood gossip, who told the police that Milo had thrown the woman out, and the radio man had to run for his life. He wound up in a lighthouse off the Virginia Coast where he married a mainland girl and managed, by devious means, to raise a thousand dollars, above the ring, for the spring fishing venture.

His marriage to the girl was nearly wrecked when he refused to save three acquaintances from the Atlantic for no better reason than that all three intended to kill him at the first opportunity and had been embarked on this project when a storm overtook them.

One survived, however, and the girl was reconciled to Milo when she had to kill this one to save her husband's life.

This doesn't seem particularly coherent, and it isn't. Mr. Robertson tosses in characters and situations and then abandons them with the gay disregard of Robinson Crusoe, on his island, in Russia, etc. The hero is alternately a cold amoralist and a gentle sentimentalist, but somehow one grows interested in the cuss—that happens in Willkie Collins's "Lady In White," too— and as far as dialogue is concerned one can signal in Mr. Robertson's Hollywood phrase—the author is a well-known character actor in pictures—"O.K. for sound!"

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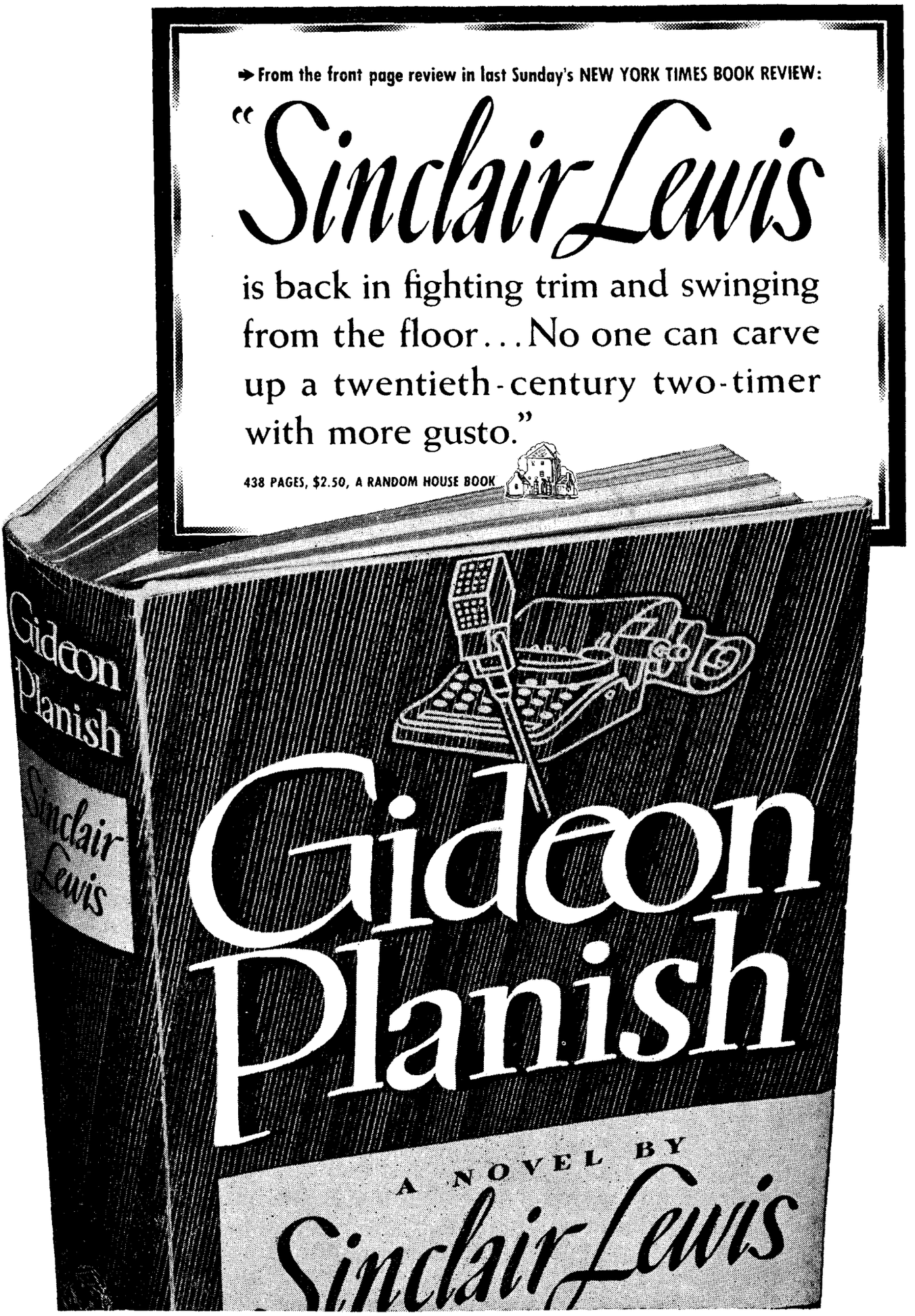
From the front page review in last Sunday's NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW:
"Sinclair Lewis
is back in fighting trim and swinging from the floor... No one can carve up a twentieth-century two-timer with more gusto."
438 PAGES, $2.50, A RANDOM HOUSE BOOK
Gideon Planish
Sinclair Lewis
Gideon Planish
A NOVEL BY
Sinclair Lewis

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TRADE Winds

THE BOOK OF THE YEAR unquestionably is Wendell Willkie's "One World." Within five days of publication, 240,000 copies had been sold, and dealers were clamoring for more. The take looked so impressive that a couple of prominent meat blacketeers were rumored to be shifting their field of operations. More than one bookseller, fired by that noble spirit of coöperation and fair play that always manifests itself at such times, was suggesting to the publishers, "Can't you sneak fifty copies out of So and So's allotment and give them to us? We'll send for them in a taxicab!" Mr. Willkie is pleased as punch, as well he should be. His book adds another inch to his steadily growing stature as one of the great men of this country. . . . Incidentally, you would be startled to know the identity of the raffish-looking lady who barged into Brentano's on April first and demanded a copy of Willkie's book. "You mean 'One World?'" inquired the clerk. "It's not out until the eighth." "Not out my left so-and-so," thundered the old battle-axe. "Alexander Woollcott said it was the first full-length detective novel ever written!" What her ladyship was seeking, of course, was Wilkie Collins's "The Moonstone." "I should have known better than to divert my patronage from Putnam's," she sniffed on the way out. . . . And Paul Pearlman reports from Washington that one of *his* customers demanded a copy of Dos Passos' "U.S.O." . . . . The next selection of the Reader's Club is in some respects its most interesting to date. It is Elmer Davis's "Giant Killer," first published by John Day in 1928. The new edition carries an introduction by Sinclair Lewis and a characteristically modest and forthright foreword by Mr. Davis. You will recall his final words as a CBS news commentator after his appointment as Director of the O.W.I.: "This is my last broadcast, as I have been called into Government service." . . . The Airways have coined a new expresssion for easing the pain of a civilian passenger whose seat is preëmpted for military purposes. "You are unabled," is what he is told. . . .

THE QUESTION that had been splitting the OWI into two angry factions for weeks resolved itself to this: was the country going to be given cold, hard facts and treated like an intelligent adult, or was it going to be ladled another dose of the drool that unctuous radio announcers use to boom the sale of soaps and laxatives? On the side of facts stood Henry Pringle and a dozen other top-notch writers. The sloganeers were headed by Bill Lewis, former Vice-President of CBS, and high-powered fugitives from Coca-Cola and Spearmint. Elmer Davis had to choose between them, and with his assistant, Mike Cowles, leaning toward the Big Business element and a fight for new appropriation looming in Congress, the writers found the cards stacked too heavily against them. They resigned in a body. One departing artist left on his desk a satirical poster of a sun-kissed maiden, captioned "The Four Delicious Freedoms—The War that Refreshes." From now on we will probably get more Office and even less Information. One bit of consolation for the publishing world: Chester Kerr, able and informed liaison man for the book division, has survived the explosion. . . .

A CHARMING but long-winded professor spent a full hour last week outlining a project for a major opus to Alfred Knopf. The latter listened in growing impatience and, when he was finally able to get a word in edgewise, he propelled the professor firmly to the door, and said, "Why don't you get this all down in a written outline? Then submit it to me, and we'll consider it carefully at the next editorial meeting." "Why, Mr. Knopf," said the professor reproachfully, "what are you talking about? I have been describing a project for which you gave me a contract, and a two-thousand-dollar advance, seven years ago!" . . . .

HOME FRONT

Thus, ENEMY SIGHTED NEAR GHENT may be enciphered by inscribing the slogan from right to left in three even rows.

ENEMYSI
GHTEDNE
ARGHENT

Then it might be rewritten according to the vertical columns.

EGA NHR ETG MEH YDE SMN IET

The receiver of the message, knowing the system his correspondent had used. . . .

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN about the flossy offices of some of the younger publishers, but, believe it or not, there is one prominent house in New York which still sports rolltop desks, single electric light bulbs attached to the ceiling by a long wire and shielded by green shades, and a reception room that looks like an illustration from *Godey's Ladies' Book*. At three o'clock every afternoon a gong rings, which means that all the employees have ten full minutes to go to the restroom or have a permanent. Private phone calls are forbidden. . . . The *New Yorker's* Harold Ross once tried to stop private calls in his office too, and went so far as to install a public coin booth in the outer office. The next morning he found the booth torn from its roots and on its back in his own private office. Stretched out inside it, a calla lily clutched in his hand and a wreath on his head, lay James Thurber. . . .

LUCIUS BEEBE, who sees and hears more darn things that nobody else does, vouches for the authenticity of this unlikely episode: Two palookas were dishing it to one another at Morocco, New York's chi-chi nightclub, the other evening. There was a momentary lull in the prevailing tumult, and the voice of one of them rang out clearly: "and if I had ten thousand dollars, by golly I'd marry the girl!" An urbane stranger turned politely and remark. "So? You really would? Well, go and do it!" And while patrons fainted and the bar staff grabbed for each other for support, the u. s. peeled ten one-thousand-dollar bills from a husky wad, handed them to the palooka, and returned to the lady he was escorting. "The bills were real," concludes Mr. Beebe; "the palooka is married and there is a record of it." . . . . Why do things like that happen only when Mr. Beebe is around? The last time I was at Morocco, the only free table was next to the kitchen, I lost a bet on the identity of Lily Damita, and the check was too high. . . .

A NEW DEFINITION holds that an expert is a man who can draw a mathematically straight line between a false premise and a foregone conclusion. . . . And a race-track tout is "a man in a loud checked suit who should drop dead." . . . . Most recent Saroyan story: In a map-reading course at his new army post, Bill fared badly, notching

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"I'd like to second the motion about the First National."

only thirty-five on his final test. "What do I know about finding my own way?" complained Bill. "Up to now, whenever I had to go somewhere new, I climbed into a taxicab!" . . . . Harold Jonas detects a definite cartoon-balloon influence on the names of writers prominent in the Spring announcements, and cites as examples, Ziff, Zam, Ickes, Imms, and Ilg. How about Zowie Akins? . . . . Aside to the gentleman who submitted a poem entitled "Dirty Gertie from Bizerte": what kind of column do you think this is anyhow? Send that stuff to Bill Benêt! . . . . Lieutenant Richard Armour must have been bitten by a critic in his early youth. He has sent Trade Winds the following poem:

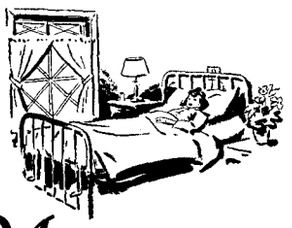
THE CRITIC

The critic is a fellow who
Can read an author's opus through
  And highly praise or mercilessly
    pan it,
Discovering, as on he reads,
The evidence he feels he needs,
  To back the views he had when he
    began it. . . .

WARD MOREHOUSE has signed a contract with Lippincott for a biography of his lifelong friend, the late George M. Cohan. Cohan will also figure prominently in the forthcoming autobiography of George Jessel, entitled "So Help Me." . . . . One of the twenty-four contemporary printmakers profiled in Carl Zigrosser's "The Artist in America" is named Jasper Plum. There is no such person. Zigrosser invented him in order to vent a little of the spleen he has stored up in thirty years of association with famous and temperamental artists. The illustrations in this volume, incidentally, beautifully reproduced in sheet-fed gravure by the Beck Engraving Company, are alone worth more than the five-dollar price.

A PERFUME CALLED CASSANDRA is being advertised over the radio as "mischievous, a wee bit sly, difficult to wear, perhaps, but such fun when you do." The Columbia University Press does not insist that the manufacturer study Greek literature before naming his perfumes, but does suggest that he at least look Casssandra up in the "Columbia Encyclopedia." Of course I dropped everything to look up the lady myself, and found, as I should have known, that she was a Trojan princess, daughter of Priam and Hecuba. She learned the art of phophecy from Apollo, but because she subsequently gave him the brusheroo, her knowledge was changed to a curse, for she was never believed. After the Trojan War she became the slave of Agamemnon, and Clytemnastra, his wife, killed her. That is scarcely a girl to name a perfume after. If I ever sponsor a perfume it will be named after my secretary, Jezebel—enchanting, irresistible, and absolutely impossible to find when you need her most. . . . The Charles E. Tuttle Company's new catalogue of Americana lists as Item Number 502. "The North and the South: A Statistical View of the Condition of the Free and Slave States," published in Boston in 1856. The authors are Chase and Sanborn. There is no mention, however, of a foreword by Charlie McCarthy. . . . Charles Allen Smart, author of "R.F.D.," and now in the Navy, writes me about the young ensign who insisted that he must have leave. Asked for a reason by his C. O., he explained that his wife was expecting a baby. "Listen, young man, and remember this," answered the C. O. "You are only necessary at the laying of the keel. For the launching you are entirely superfluous." . . . .

BENNETT CERF.



MRS. GWYNETH EVANS lay quietly in her bed thinking calmly of what was going to happen that night to the hospital. "Seven killed," she said, half aloud. She had dreamed all about it. You will meet Mrs. Evans and her premonitions of disaster in the opening pages of this absorbing novel of life in the London blitz. You will also meet doctors, nurses, medical students and patients in one of London's great hospitals And you will be with them for twenty-four hours — long enough to understand what makes them tick, long enough to realize many of their emotions, hopes and fears. *Night Duty* is the first important novel of hospital life to come out of wartime London but it has a serenity that you will find surprising

Night Duty

BY JOHN STUART AREY

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The Opinions of Channing Pollock

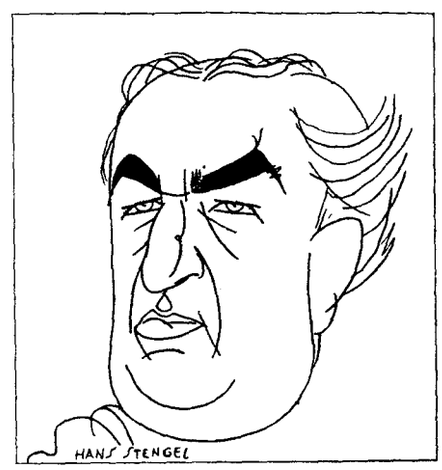
An Old Schooler Looks Back Over His Shoulder

JOHN CORBIN

LOOKING backward* on the Broadway of his youth, almost half a century ago, Channing Pollock is at pains to convince us, and himself, that his vision is not bathed "in the glow of sunset." In those days there really were giants in the land—Irving and Terry, Bernhardt and Duse, Coquelin and Réjane and Sonnenthal, Joseph Jefferson, Richard Mansfield, and the company of Augustin Daly. "Am I merely nostalgic," he asks, "in suggesting that the idols of the new arts, including Charlie McCarthy and Donald Duck, somehow indicate shrinkage?" Perhaps not.

The playwrights of that day have names that sound less majestically from the tomb, yet he speaks of them with scarcely less respect. When of late a play of the turn of the century was revived, a youthful critic disdained it as fit only for "the naïveté of the audiences of that day." Mr. Pollock's comment is "Nerts!" It is of course no fair, as children say, to make burlesque revivals of "Why Women Sin" and "Nellie the Beautiful Cloak Model," of murder via the factory buzzsaw and the stage locomotive, alleging that they were cherished as dramatic art by the generation of William Winter and the Four Hundred. But does it follow that "the chief difference between yesterday's better plays and today's" are merely superficial matters —"questions of the commonness of telephones and osculation" — including the great discovery that the once fully-skirted sex are not solid to the ground but are, like ourselves, bifurcated bipeds?

The author of this present protest against an old pal of Broadway is so much more richly steeped in sunset glow as to have seen the Hamlet of Edwin Booth. If further proof is needed that I am the older and therefore (according to both our creeds) the better soldier, it lies in the fact that I once took part in a game of I spy with my brothers, during which nurse hid me beneath her bustle. That early discovery of bipedal bifurcation, clad in Canton flannel, was the complete and permanent ruin of a manly dignity which was nothing if not Victorian. Like murder, truth will out. It may be true that actors of the calibre Mr. Pollock celebrates have come to be scarce as teeth in Donald Duck. But it is not true that there has been only superficial change in the art of writing plays. The fact is worth establishing, for it is one of many milestones in a half-century's development of the national mood, of which Mr. Pollock himself is deeply though perhaps vaguely aware. For beneath the joyous ebullience of



Channing Pollock may be unconscious of twentieth century sophistication.

"Harvest of my Years," its wealth of colorful and side-splitting anecdotes, and its record of loyal and generous friendships, there is yet a concern for our moral and spiritual welfare which sounds the depths of tragedy.

Even as the Victorian era was scientific and skeptical, it was also poetic—with this difference that science and skepticism were waxing while poetry was on the wane. When Rostand produced "Cyrano de Bergerac" France and all the world acclaimed it as bringing a rebirth of poetic drama. One critic demurred—Emile Faguet, if I remember. He declared it no renaissance but a clouded sundown, however splendid the clouds. Today we may see that not only was poetic drama passing but also the old code of idealism, of truth and honor and patriotism, which had held sway in the Atlantic nations, and indeed in Germany, from the days of Corneille and Racine, of Calderon, of Shakespeare.

At least as a playboy, Mr. Pollock himself is a victim of twentieth-century "sophistication," though blandly unconscious of the fact. The heroes of his sunset glow are the Frohmans, the Shuberts, and Al Woods, Raymond Hitchcock, Anna Held, Flo Ziegfeld, Rennold Wolf, Avery Hopwood. Though he ultimately quit Broadway in the high dudgeon of preacher and moralist, he was curiously blind to the tradition of "legitimate" acting and drama. Forbes Robertson's Hamlet was the best of his generation, as was John Gielgud's, and both top notch by any standard. Maurice Evans has made several productions of all but the first rank. And all have been highly successful. Somewhere beneath the surface of our sophistication the racial spirit of human truth and beauty is still alive. From time to time it comes up bubbling, if only to sink again. But not one of these revivals is garnered in the harvest of Mr. Pollock's years. Forbes Robertson is, indeed, named—but only as brother-in-law of Maxine Elliott.

AND by what standard can the art of play-making be described as static? To Mr. Pollock the advent of Ibsen appears to have meant nothing. We do not find even the name of the great Norwegian of whiskered prose —no doubt because of his lack of a pulchritudinous sister-in-law. Let Mr. Pollock read the early theatricalities of Pinero and proceed to "Trelawny of the Wells" and "Iris." Let him read "Black-Eyed Susan" or any Victorian sentimentalism and then the "sentimental" humors of Barrie—whose name appears only as the playwright of another charmer, Maude Adams. Such was the manner in which Mr. Pollock's eyes were blinded to the fact that all about him was blossoming a "New School" of drama quite comparable with that of Goldsmith and Sheridan, of Wycherly and Congreve.

In large measure, to be sure, the New School was native and spontaneous, as in Gilbert's "Galatea" and his musical satires, in the pyrotechnics of Oscar Wilde's farces, and the tenderly Celtic phantasies of Barrie. But after Ibsen it took on a new firmness of technique, together with a respect for the actualities of life and character, including things of the mind, which had been all but unknown in the theatre of the old day. In Bernard Shaw, satire and ideology and characters of Celtic extravagance rolled together into a largely undigested lump. There were also characters and situations admirably fresh and vital and humanly appealing; and these, curiously ignored by the Boswellian Hesketh Pearson, will doubtless keep the plays alive when their ideology has become old stuff. But the fact remains that, though himself a very imperfect Ibsenite, Shaw opened the doors of our theatre to plays conceived in the milieu of gentlefolk not wholly impervious to ideas.

That this advance in the craft and

*HARVEST OF MY YEARS. By Channing Pollock. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1943. 395 pp. $3.50.

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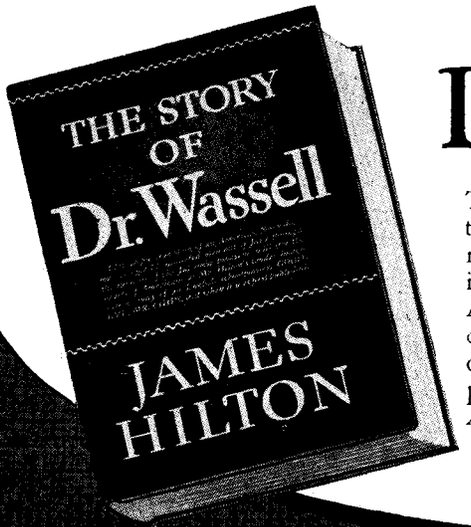
James Hilton's

simple, heart-warming, true story of an American Navy doctor

THE STORY OF DR. WASSELL



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BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

the art of play-making had no influence in America simply isn't so. True, mid-Victorian artificialities of plot and conventualisms of character lingered on. Well into the first decade of the century it seemed that no American could build a solid dramatic structure or people it with freshly observed human beings. Even Clyde Fitch, with his still unequaled flair for novel episodes and the superficial humors of character, was only beginning when he died to give us substantial characters and solidly built drama. Yet all of a sudden we had an efflorescence of plays fresh from our own soil and each one all of a piece. The austere yet sympathetic William Archer commented on this: and he added that, whereas English playwrights were mainly concerned with the doings of aristocracy and gentry, the new American drama was that of our people as a whole. There was of course no acting of the kind one used to call great. Characters were "cast to type," impersonation being a lost art, together with poetic beauty and passion. Yet in their own sphere acting and management were, and still are as it seems to me, far better than before.

What blinded Mr. Pollock to the new stagecraft was perhaps the fact that its presiding genius was Bernard Shaw—not the Shaw of Androcles, Cleopatra's Caesar, Pygmalion, and Saint Joan, but the socialist Shaw of seeming cynicism and flagrant negation. In the between-war decades, this "Shavian" iconoclasm combined with the Freudian libido to sweep away every vestige not only of Victorian but of Shakespearean standards. Mr. Pollock remained true to the Victorian morality—and to Victorian technique.

The result was a certain coldness on the part of the critics of the day, of whom I was one. He now deposes that we were unanimous against him. My own memory runs quite otherwise. On the morrow of his production of "The Fool" I awoke to find that, as it seemed to me, I was the only one who had roundly manhandled his play. That is a situation which, believe it or not, the most case-hardened critic finds distressing. It happened again the same week when I was the only one who fell, all out, for Austin Strong's "Seventh Heaven." As it turned out, both plays scored sensational popular successes, so I had a fifty-fifty consolation.

Mr. Pollock's comeback with "The Fool" was due to one of his Herculean feats of publicity. He had discovered a secret, known also to P. T. Barnum, that if only a show can be publicized as The Greatest Moral Show on Earth the goose hangs high. Over the heads of the critics, he appealed to church folk through their ministers, himself taking the pulpit when he was permitted. He addressed town halls, high schools, and sewing circles. Most of such people passionately long to go to the theatre and will do so by hundreds of thousands if only they can convince their families that thereby they are to be uplifted. The greatest theatre-going public on earth is that which is principled against the theatre.

IN point of fact they were uplifted, for "The Fool" bore a great moral and spiritual message and was soundly dramatic for ears not attuned to creaks in the hinges. And Mr. Pollock was uplifted. Owing to this and a similar experience with "The Enemy" in which I did not, as the French say, "assist," he despaired of the critics, abandoned Broadway, and took to the lecture platform, talking of simple moralities and eternal verities of the spirit with a sound and illumined common sense, a gusto, and indeed a sense of humor, that have made him a national figure. Out of this experience he discovered a fact of primary historic significance seldom realized by historians. Beneath the prevailing fashions of any era, whether moral or mental, the racial genius moves onward steadily, almost as if those fashions did not exist. Under Victoria the sexual habits of the people at large were very much what they had always been, and still mainly are. In spite of the Shavian decades, in which patriotism and heroism and self-sacrifice were laughed down the wind, the young men at the front are fighting with the ancient valor. A nation may seem to change its mind in a jiffy, may do so to all outward appearance; but it does not change its national character.

VALLEY in ARMS

by EARL SCHENCK MIERS

Here is the thrilling, romantic history of a period in the development of our nation which has been little understood—the settling of the Connecticut Valley. But, it is history told through the thoughts and lives of ordinary citizens—fighting American pioneers—rather than through the deeds of statesmen. Savage warfare and tender romance blend as the author unfolds this truly historic legend of our American tradition.

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A Brief for Traver

TROUBLE-SHOOTER. By Robert Traver. New York: The Viking Press. 1943. 294 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by MELVILLE CANE

WHY "Robert Traver" should screen his identity under a pseudonym when, according to the blurb, "hundreds of his friends will promptly recognize him," is the least of the unsolved mysteries in these chronicles of crime. For, to resort to an understatement, "Robert," whom every one in the book calls "Johnny," has nothing to be ashamed of.

It's always a satisfaction for this reviewer, a member of Mr. Traver's profession, to report the discovery of a lawyer who knows how to write. There aren't too many. Lawyers when not preparing briefs and affidavits are likely to be self-conscious, stilted, and bumbling when faced with the prospect of literary authorship. Mr. Traver, fortunately, has no such embarrassment. With easy assurance, in a style flexible and adjusted to the variety of his material, he sets down not merely a series of episodes in the day's work but the background, mores, and overtones, both tragic and comic.

In truth Mr. Traver in the process of relating his experiences as district attorney on the upper peninsula of Michigan opens up heretofore unexploited territory for fiction and folklore. In this respect he resembles Bellamy Partridge, who a few years ago in "Country Lawyer" put the Finger Lakes section of New York State on the map. But where Partridge went back to the General Grant era, Traver deals with the present-day life of a still primitive countryside. Here one often feels the qualities of a frontier society, where law and order hold only a wavering control. It is a region of wild natural splendor, of many lakes and streams, mighty forests, hills broken down for the mining of iron ore; a region of crude settlements by many races—Finns, Germans, Irish, French-Canucks, Italians.

Such colorful landscape and heterogeneous strains furnish the material for Mr. Traver's chapters. He can write lyrically and with gusto of many a fishing or hunting trip. He can philosophize without stuffiness on life as he sees it from his ringside seat as public prosecutor. And he sees plenty, —from murder by dynamiting, rape, incest, insanity, drunken violence, to the run of minor offenses where the culprit is let off with a fine or suspended sentence. In these chapters one finds Greek tragedy, the pathos of empty lives, tall tales, jokes that would have been relished by Lincoln and Mark Twain.

When a boozy applicant for a game license was asked the color of his eyes, in all sincerity he answered: "Bloodshot."

Traver tried lawyering for a while in Chicago but soon gave it up; it was too much like working on a conveyor-belt. He had his fling at "the cream of the legal talent" doing the bidding of big business, renouncing "their historic role of fighters for individual freedom and liberty."

But out in the northland his style is uncramped. Without boasting, he reveals himself as a servant of the public, sympathetic, humorous, as devoted as a priest, and as lenient to human error as his job will permit. It is no wonder those Michiganders vote for him.

Random House is proud of the distinguished young writers it has published in the past few years:

1940 **THE OX-BOW INCIDENT** *by Walter Van Tilburg Clark*
1941 **WHAT MAKES SAMMY RUN?** *by Budd Schulberg*
1941 **STORM** *by George R. Stewart*
1942 **NIGHT SHIFT** *by Maritta Wolff*

To this list it now makes a notable addition

GOLDEN WEDDING

BY JO PAGANO

THIS is a warm and friendly novel about an Italian family who came to America to find freedom. Mr. Pagano has captured in this book the burning and unquenchable spirit of an immigrant family, and the whole-souled enjoyment of its fracases and celebrations . . . A rich and sympathetic chronicle of how an American family came to be.

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REVOLUTION ON THE SOCIETY PAGE

(*Continued from page 4*)

tler, and Haskett Stevenson, third assistant postmaster general under President Polk. On her paternal side she is related to Charlemagne, Doctor Pepper, and R. H. Macy. She attended Miss Croft's School, Foxcroft, Ashcroft, the University of Arizona, and L'Ecole Marie, Dijon, France.

Mr. Harrison's great-grandfather, Walsingham Harrison, was the first American minister to Liberia and the author of a well known book on England—"Darts Throwing in Hertfordshire." He also was the associate editor of "Who's Who in Nursing, 1864." Mr. Harrison studied at Yale, Harvard, and Harry's Bar in Paris. He is vice-president of Universal Tweezers Corporation, and twice represented the United States at the annual International Tweezers Convention in Zagreb.

Any aristocracy worthy of the name is animated by a sense of noblesse oblige. There was, for example, the occasion not long ago when the fashionable of New York turned out for a Van Gogh show with incomparable dash and did much to rescue that neglected genius from threatened oblivion. At the same moment, the shops they patronize did their part by putting the painter's famous sunflowers on beach costumes and exploiting his brilliant yellows in bed jackets, so that by joint effort of patrons and the patronized Vincent Van Gogh's name for a short time became almost as well known around town as that of Vincent Lopez.

These activities were fully reported in the society pages of the city. Then, fortunately for him, there came Pablo Picasso's turn in a memorable evening all compact of Art and Bergdorff-Goodman. "Pandemonium reigned at the premiere of Pablo Picasso's exhibition," said the society page of *The New York World-Telegram*. Five thousand persons were present. "John Hay Whitney, whose enthusiasms are talkies and track, talked art with Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Rockefeller. The latter wore a wool coachman's coat and carried an ermine muff. Everyone made a fuss over Edward N. M. Warburg and his fiancèe, Mary Whelan Currier, who is petite and blonde . . ." Fixtures of the society page, trailing finishing schools and dilatory domiciles after them, cluttered the stairways of the museum as they posed for newspaper photographers in the name of Art. It is therefore with dejected surprise that one comes upon this note of dissent in the selfsame *World-Telegram*:

"There should have been a Voltaire or a Swift present to record the event . . . Making a background for the elegantes were the Picasso paintings: early blue ones drenched with poverty and disillusion; late ones, their barbaric color, cadaverous forms, and gnarled rhythms proclaiming with terrifying impact that very decadence in our contemporary world which the spectators in their own way seemed to typify."

Many ladies of society have a passion for doing good works that is excelled only by a passion for publicity that mounts sometimes to pathological heights of exhibitionism. It seems to be of relatively recent origin and is, in its way, an expression of our times. For, as democracy has flourished, precepts of personal privacy and the democratic axiom that a man's home is his castle seem to have withered. With the passage of time and the evolution of manners, one came to be more and more eager to be interviewed, to be photographed, to tell all; while the occupants of the home became a traveling piscatorial exhibit, and mention in a gossip column an award of merit. Such conduct and ambitions would once have made one declassè in the eyes of society, but that was in a day long since vanished.

IF, moreover, your name and photograph appear frequently enough in the society pages, your labors in confusing conspicuousness with distinction may be rewarded beyond your dreams. You may be asked to recommend, say, Droop's Face Cream. Color photographs of you, looking as you looked that day upon a peak in Darien when Droop's first swam into your ken, will appear everywhere. You will be described: "Mrs. Chichester Farthingale. Blonde. Lovely. Noted Horsewoman. Sketches. Reads a lot." And you will say to the housewives and working girls of America:

"Before going out in the evening, I always apply Droop's Face Cream. Then I remove it, use Droop's Stardust Face Powder, and my skin remains fresh and tingling all evening."

Everywhere on this continent women, following your lead, will buy

Droop's, and Cleopatra in her day was not half so celebrated as you will be in yours. You will be paid $5,000 for the use of your name, other women will envy you your fame, and your grandchildren will aspire to follow where you have led. Parallel lines will meet on the cosmetic counters of drug stores, Droop's will become the long sought catalytic agent fusing into homogeneity the disparate elements of this heterogeneous land, and thus, in your aloof, aristocratic manner, you will have dealt a powerful stroke for democracy.

In the meanwhile, amid death and destruction, the society page continues to report the activities of those who keep civilization alive through cocktail parties and dinners, and if their efforts seem to some merely the furious retchings of inanely dull people, this is proof of what one has to endure in a still raw country. The institution, moreover, is under attack in Washington where not to be reported socially at least twice a week is equivalent to exile in Toledo. More dangerous, the *Post's* mild revolution may be indicative of a post-war revaluation of values; a prelude perhaps to a drab period when those who are of significance to society will be celebrated rather than those who are "in society."

One may comfort oneself bleakly by concluding that if the society page should go, its loss, while painful, may still be bearable. For, as Mrs. James Farley once said of the city where the anti-society page revolution began, "There is less here than meets the eye."

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Snug, the Joiner, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," by W. Shakespeare.
2. Penrod Schofield, in "Penrod," by Booth Tarkington.
3. Roy Lane, in "Broadway," by Philip Dunning and George Abbott.
4. The Actor, in "The Guardsman," by Franz Molnar.
5. Ninetta Crummles, the Infant Phenomenon, in "Nicholas Nickleby," by Charles Dickens.
6. Merton Gill, in "Merton of the Movies," by Harry Leon Wilson.
7. Drury Lane, in "The Tragedy of X," by Barnaby Ross or Ellery Queen.
8. The Duke of Bilgewater, in "Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain.
9. Terry Randall, in "Stage Door," by Edna Ferber and George Kaufman.
10. "Bethel Merriday," by Sinclair Lewis.

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The Meaning of Scientific Results

FORWARD WITH SCIENCE. By Roger D. Rusk. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1943. 306 *pp., and index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by WALDEMAR KAEMPFFERT

ONCE upon a time the atom was a hard little ball—the smallest conceivable, indivisible unit of matter. Now it is far more complicated than the solar system, with electrons revolving around a nucleus and leaping from orbit to orbit without any regard for time and space. A universe which was once a smoothly running machine has become a problem in higher geometry. Matter and energy, once wholly separate, are now one and the same. To explain the new concepts popularly is very much like trying to tell an Eskimo in words how the music of the Star Spangled Banner sounds. There is only one way to understand music, and that is to drink it in through the ear; there is only one way to understand physics, and that is to grasp the equations which inform us that space is curved and matter very empty.

The best that can be done for the ordinary reader is to present the results of experimental investigation and to explain the meaning of the results. This Professor Rusk does as skilfully as simple words permit. And so he discusses relativity, the structure of the atom, the cosmic rays, the constitution of the stars, radioactivity, atomic energy, and other matters in a way that will make its appeal to readers who want their information in palatable doses.

Like many of the younger professors Dr. Rusk has no sympathy with the old-fashioned view that the scientist is not concerned with the social effect of his discoveries. But the discussion of what is called the "impact of science on society" is manifestly not that of a professional sociologist. The emphasis is too heavy on the outward changes wrought by inventions and too little on the change in human outlook and on the relation of science to capitalism and democracy and to the environment. Both scientists and theologians will question the statement that "science and religion can no longer be kept in . . . separate compartments." Conflict has arisen because the church once tried to bring them together. Now it is recognized that it is the business of scientists to explain how the universe is constructed and that of the artist, the mystic, and the priest to clothe the structure with purpose and meaning. When religion and science are thus considered there is every reason for keeping the two apart. These excursions into the philosophy of science detract not one whit from a first-rate book which ought to satisfy the curiosity of many readers who are puzzled by the exploits of atom-smashers and the creators of universes that expand and contract like bubbles.

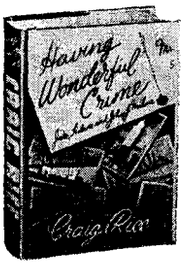
The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
FAREWELL TO THE ADMIRAL *Peter Cheyney* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Private Investigator Slim Callaghan meets tough and seductive characters in trailing slayer of elderly Briton.	Tough-fibred hero, his philandering assistant, and galaxy of slinky ladies and hardboiled gents give yarn tart flavor.	On the cheap side
CELLINI SMITH *Robert Reeves* (Houghton, Mifflin Co.: $2.)	Several murders in and near California hobo camp give detective Smith personal injury and other tough moments.	Good tough hobo dialog. Plenty of excitement, a brash and likeable detective, and thrills by the gallon.	Very good
DEATH LOVES A SHINING MARK *Anne Hocking* (Crime Club: $2.)	Glamor girl, in Cairo during present war, meets expected end. Major Austen solves it.	Interesting background and full cast of striking characters. Tale has more than ordinary amount of emotion and interesting wind up.	Good
SAID WITH FLOWERS *Anne Nash* (Crime Club: $2.)	Lively proprietresses of California flower shop find corpse almost on doorstep. Their efforts land the criminal.	"Karp the Killer," who monograms his crimes, gives yarn satisfactorily sinister fillip and both dialog and action are bright and swiftly-paced.	Entertaining

CRAIG RICE'S latest mystery, *Having Wonderful Crime*, has just been published. On the theory that there are still a few people (those who have just learned to read, say) who need further elucidation:

Having Wonderful Crime shows CRAIG RICE'S famous trio—Jake Justus, his beauteous wife Helene, and criminal lawyer John J. Malone—on a New York vacation. Their impact on Manhattan is terrific. The highlights are, briefly: a decapitated bride who sends cheery postcards from Niagara Falls; a not-so-kosher escort bureau; a disappearing bridegroom with an inexplicable yen for the Staten Island ferry; and a model who goes in for censorable correspondence.



CRAIG RICE *aficionados* will realize, of course, that the above inventory merely skims the surface of *Having Wonderful Crime*. It makes no attempt to describe the hilarious antics of O'Brien, Birnbaum, and Schultz, those three stalwart members of New York's Finest. Nor of the Greenwich Village poetess who relentlessly insists on reciting her latest inspiration in the very teeth of murder.

Ever since the first CRAIG RICE manuscript arrived at Inner Sanctum Mysteries four years ago, the editors have been floundering in a welter of adjectives—their own and critics'—to express the captivating quality of this author's novels. Closest approximation is the following paragraph from a letter written by LOUIS UNTERMEYER:

It is not exactly a blend—a composite of AGATHA CHRISTIE'S ingenuity, DASHIELL HAMMETT'S speed, and DOROTHY SAYERS' wit—but a combination and an idiom as unique as it is engrossing. I cannot imagine myself skipping a line by CRAIG RICE."

So, if you're in the mood to be having wonderful time, read

HAVING WONDERFUL CRIME

by Craig Rice

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The Phoenix Nest

IT really looks as though Spring were coming, which makes the heart expand, and that is why I have not got around to replying to a feverish letter from a certain E. N. Emmett of San Francisco who is sure that my Gremlin, Moses Gramling, is in the pay of "the New Deal moguls." He wants the *SRL* to get out a Fourth Term Number, and so far as I am concerned, I welcome the idea; but then I don't run the magazine. Moses was around the other day, though I didn't see him. But he dropped one of his memoranda, which got lost under some papers, and I didn't find it till pretty late. And E. B. White in the *New Yorker* had, in the meanwhile, done such a beautiful job on a certain freshman Congresswoman's letter to the President, that this of Moses's can hardly vie. Nevertheless:

Congress makes mistakes, Mr. President—
  Just itty bitty mistakes;
But we wish, so long as you are resident,
  You'd have pity on our pains and aches.
We try! We try! We try, Mr. President!

A Poem on Airplanes

May Henderson Taylor of Los Angeles says the P-38's are very active at their practise these days, out her way. "I watched them from my porch steps the other afternoon, as they went through their paces to the south, and I'm enclosing a sonnet I wrote about them—

P-38's

Athwart the dazzling monstrance of the sun,
  four shapes, twin-tailed and luminous, aspire
on glittering wings; swift skimming, one by one,
  the trackless turnings of a widening gyre.
Dancing in beauty on the floorless air,
  they move, throughout the golden afternoon,
in slow-paced pavans, brisk boleros, where
  sings neither viol nor flute, nor any tune.
But it is no caprice that bids them soar,
  these gleaming battle-eagles of ours that hover,
ruffling the air with metronomic roar;
  the twirl, the tumble, and the sharp recover
prefigure stoops upon an enemy prey.
  Deadly! And yet, from here, it looks like play."

I wish to thank August W. Derleth of Sauk City, Wisconsin, (not Sauk Centre, Minnesota, where Sinclair Lewis come from!), Bertha Geis Biebigheiser, of Winston-Salem, N. C., and Eldon Emerson Smith of Sterling, Colorado, for their comprehensive lists of Little Magazines with their comments upon them. I regret that I have decided I cannot discuss this subject any further, as I must have more space for other matters. I am glad also that Mr. Smith likes the "current affairs comment" in which I have occasionally indulged—likes it as much as Mr. Emmett dislikes it. They ought to meet sometime!

Gardeners, Attend!

Robert A. Gerson of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, writes:

It will soon be time to stir up that perennial argument about how to pronounce forsythia (or is it "forsithia?"). See if you can remember how to say it, and wistaria too, after you read these examples in feminine rhyme.

ARGUMENT IN FEMININE RHYME

'Tis sad and mysterious
How the wisterias
  Wither and die,
While with roots a bit pithier
Hard forsithia
  Spreads far and nigh.

The health of wistarias
Seems so precarious
  We rate them high;
But, surfeited by the a-
Bundant forsythia
  We pass them by.

Forsiythia golden
To you we're beholden
  For early spring joy;
Yet more we're desiring
Wistaeria expiring,
  They are more coy.

Mr. Gerson adds that, in verse three, the weird spelling indicates that the reader may take his choice!

"Weeping Cross" Again

My friend Louis Dodge of Redondo Beach, California, remembers Henry Longan Stuart's "Weeping Cross." He sends me this:

As a newspaper man I received an advance copy of that book at the time of its publication, and it made an impression upon my mind which is vivid to this day. I was much puzzled at the time to note that so original a novel should be received by the reading world with so little enthusiasm. It seems to me that the author's somberness, mentioned in your column, might have been caused by the at least comparative failure of so notable a book. If my memory is not at fault, the typographical aspect of the novel was not attractive, there being a long prologue, or introductory section, which was printed in smaller type than the body of the book. I think this might have discouraged many readers—especially in the case of a new writer. In recent years I have wondered why the publishers have not made a second effort to introduce to a larger public so engrossing and original a story.

Back in the old *St. Nicholas* days one of my favorite contributors was J. G. Francis, who did so many cheerful cats and joyous Aztecs. The other day in the big drugstore at the Grand Central, of all places, where several groaning counters sell off publishers' remainders for as low as nineteen cents, I was joyously amazed to find a mint copy of "The Joyous Aztecs," Pictures and verses by J. G. Francis, in a late edition from the Century Company—1929. It wasn't that Francis was so deliriously good a rhymester, but he humanized the Aztecs, though drawing them the way they looked on old wall paintings; just as he humanized his smiling cats, and the other animals that once went to Bayreuth for the Music Festival!

The Aztec Kink could neither smile nor dance,
Life held him in a fixed and formal trance,
  until one day the Cheerful Cats
  Appeared at Court in wondrous hats
    and then—(*new picture*)

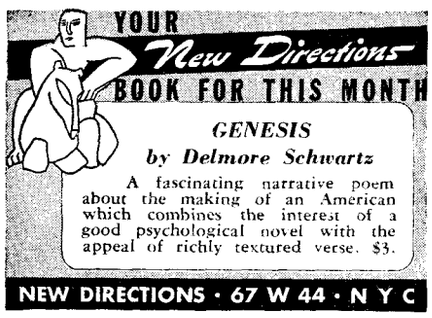
This picture tells the rest of this Romance.

Then there is the one about the frightened fisherman and the awful ocelot; the horrible Homing Bee which looks like no bee I ever imagined; but the one that was longest a household word in our family is entitled "An Aztec Fragment."

It is not alone the dreadful morning bath
That fills this hieroglyphic babe with wrath.
Hie complacent brother's jeers
  Start those two resentful tears,-
But behold! the Father cometh with a lath.

I suppose it was the idea of retribution richly deserved by the jeerer that made it such a treasured possession! Like John Bennett, Francis created something entirely his own in the realm of graphic humor. And does anyone possibly remember the long-ago "Chip," that forgotten antique of humorous illustration?

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.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The Crostics Club

IN rereading Barrie's whimsical "The Greenwood Hat,"* I came across this characteristic bit which I pass on to reinforce our high-brow (non-reference books) members: "A few years ago I was presented by a kindly firm of publishers with an encyclopaedia in many large volumes, and I dote on it but don't know what to do with it. In the meantime I have hidden it behind a screen."

If I give you the word *williwaws* will you scorn it à la *towrow?* What a find with its luscious w's, from the writer of a recent war book in a radio interview with our lively Bennett Cerf! I'm sorry not to recall the author, but if you are within radio reach of station WQXR I recommend for your diversion and instruction that quarter hour he conducts Wednesdays at five under the auspices of the Council for Books in Wartime.

Two others have responded to our *colophon* query. George W. Newton, Muscatine, Iowa, writes that a discussion of its origin may be found in Will Durant's "Life of Greece," pg. 148. Walter R. Spofford, Librarian of the University Club, Chicago, not a DCer but a consultant to one of its members, takes it for granted that we see incunabula and hence should know the appropriateness of the Greek word as originally used; but he gives us for specific reference Alfred W. Pollard's "Fine Books," pg. 14; "The information which we now expect to find on a title-page was given in a paragraph mostly at the end of a book, to which bibliographers have agreed to give the name of *colophon* from the Greek for *finishing stroke.*"

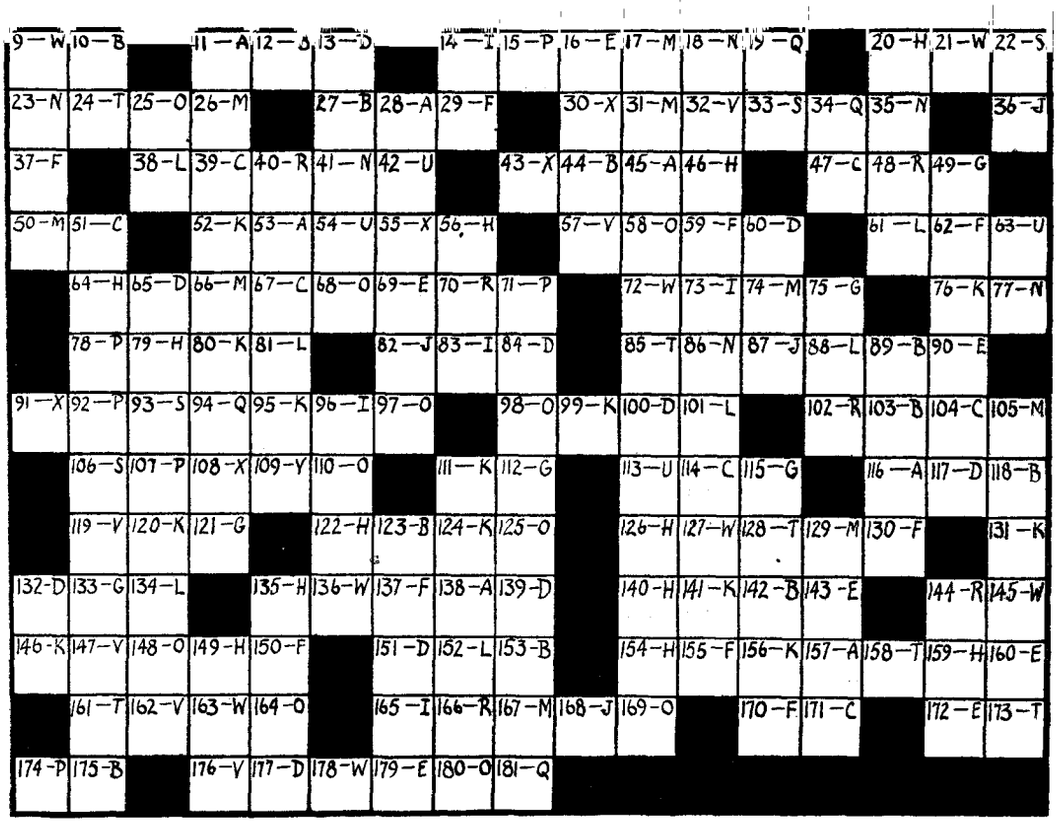
Among our octogenarian DCers of long standing is Cornelia M. Raymond, known to Vassar students past and present as the daughter of a former Vassar President and as Historian of the College. She began retiring, I am told, in 1931, but so indispensable was she to the College that she was recalled after each of her three retirements. As Historian Emeritus she continues to occupy daily an office in the Library.

Another we welcome from professional ranks is James G. Leyburn, Dept. of Sociology at Yale, who writes that I don't know what I miss by not having DCs to solve. But I do, for in those first years, not divining the mail they would evoke, I worked many a one received and returned them with comments. I should enjoy doing the same now, but if I did I should be on the City Relief roll!

By the way, wouldn't you who enjoy concocting DCs like to set up an exchange bureau among yourselves? Perhaps David E. Moeser, General Manager of Conrad's, Boston, would like to organize it?

E. S. K.

*A Memoir of James Anon (himself) 1885-87, published at the request of his friends. 1938. Chas. Scribner's Sons.



Double-Crostics: No. 474

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 7 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Massachusetts physician in the Continental Army, author of "American Medical Biography" (1828).

B. Epistolary romance by C. B. Brown (1801).

C. Tennessee Community for gradual slave emancipation (1825).

D. Socialized community founded by the Rappists in Indiana (1814).

E. He summoned the first Representative Assembly in an American Colony (Va.—1618-21).

F. Epithet of Apollo for his sanctity of field mice.

G. Referring to future time (2 wds.)

H. Blank verse poem by Robert Frost (Pulitzer Prize—1924).

I. Saddle pads or panels.

J. American Bibliographer in London helpful to Irving, Prescott, etc.

K. American authoress (1850-1934) full pseudonym—*Expiation* (1890).

L. Having droplike spots.

M. Moderating; abating.

N. Roman poet (B.C. 239-169).

O. To be born; to come into public notice (3 wds.)

P. Novel by Jack London—1904.

Q. Somewhat eccentric or peculiar.

R. Sculptor of the Seated Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial at Washington.

S. Admiral in charge of American operations in European waters, World War.

T. Long outer garments originally of fur or fur-lined.

U. *The Apostle of the Franks* (437-533?).

V. Close, personal, friendly relationship.

W. A Tahiti novelist of note (1887-).

X. Supply for an occasion.

WORDS

11 28 116 157 53 138 45

175 118 10 123 103 12 44 142 27 89 155

51 47 171 39 104 67 114

117 60 84 132 65 139 151 100 177 13

90 179 16 7 160 172 69 143

130 59 170 37 137 62 29 155 150

112 121 75 49 133 115

46 149 64 126 135 140 20 154 122 79 56 159

6 73 14 3 83 165 96

87 36 168 82

76 156 131 141 124 120 52 99 146 80 95 111

81 101 61 134 152 38 88

66 31 105 167 26 74 50 17 129

18 35 77 41 86 23

25 125 164 98 169 180 68 58 148 110 97

71 15 107 78 2 92 174

34 94 181 8 19 1

102 70 40 48 144 166

22 93 106 33

128 158 161 173 5 85 24

42 54 113 63

176 147 57 162 119 32 109 4

9 21 72 178 145 127 136 163

91 108 55 30 43

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